

MAY- 1942

HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, NO. 20]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 31, 1942

[FIVE PICE

Notes

Terrible If True

A terrible tale of ordered anarchy comes from Khurja. A correspondent writes to say that, for no cause he can understand, practically all normal activities have been stopped. Even the sale of bamboos and mats for biers was prohibited. Even building activities have been stopped causing the greatest inconvenience and damage. Money is taken from the people on the slightest pretext and a reign of terror prevails. I have given here the barest outline of the doings in Khurja in the hope that there will be full investigation and if the facts are true further damage will be prevented.

Sevagram, 25-5-42

Why The Difference ?

A Professor writes :

"You have advised the British to withdraw. About the Princes you say, 'But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless.' Why not ask the Princes whose tyranny is older and perhaps more deep-rooted than that of the British to abdicate immediately ?"

I am surprised that the Professor has failed to see the distinction between the Princes and the Paramount Power. The Princes (present) are a creation of the Paramount Power. They derive their authority from it. Their abdication will not end the princely rule. Another will immediately take the vacant place and in the absence of one the State will be under British administration. Thus, whichever way you look, you will find the British Power by its very nature blocking the way to Truth.

Sevagram, 23-5-42

M. K. G.

Khadi and Village Industry

Q. You have often said that khadi and village industry are supplementary to each other. But you have created separate organisations for them with the result that a khadi worker, when he goes to a village, is unable to spare time from his own particular work for either village industries or uplift. Recently you have asked for khadi and village industry *bhandars* to be run jointly. Times are such that transport of goods is becoming increasingly difficult. Should not khadi and village industry centres, therefore, be converted into one? Would it not be a good thing if khadi workers gave up all ideas of sending locally produced khadi to distant places and concentrated on both khadi and village

industry production for local use? Khadi workers are asked to penetrate into the houses of artisans with charkha and train them, to rouse a love of village products in them, improve their ways of living, health, sanitation, etc. But if they have no time to spare, how can they do all that is expected of them?

A. I admit that, if a khadi worker's entire time is employed in khadi work, he cannot possibly attend to either village uplift or industry. Three persons would be required for the three tasks. My idea is that in a well-organised village one person should suffice. For example, one worker may devote two hours to taking in yarn, distributing slivers and spinning tools, and sales of khadi; village industry work might take even less, and the remainder of the time he could give to village uplift and general education. This has not till now been possible because the khadi worker's time has been devoted to teaching people how to spin etc. But now the time has come when khadi and village products, locally produced, must also be locally absorbed. In that case one person will be able to do all the work. Today it suffices to say that all this work is complementary — and must become one as far as possible. The amalgamation cannot be imposed; it must be a natural growth. I do not, I cannot, apportion any blame to anyone for the existing position. Our plans have progressed as far as our intelligence and experience could have taken them. The creation of khadi *vidyalayas* is meant to expand and improve the technique of work. We shall learn from them how all departments of village work can be amalgamated.

(From *Sarvodaya*)

M. K. G.

What Cost Violence?

Many who paid homage to non-violence from afar are disturbed about its practicability when the perspective is altered and when naked violence unashamed threatens to stalk the land. It is, therefore, necessary for us to consider the so-called effectiveness of violence. We shall not have space here to weigh the evils and benefits of violence and non-violence in the social, ethical and cultural spheres. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves purely to the economic field and that too more especially to armaments. Man differs from the brute in his creative propensities. Man's progress, therefore, is measured by his creativeness. Modern warfare, on the other hand, is a competition in destructive capacity. What with centralised methods of production and standardisation we are reaching a rate of destruction which bids fair to wipe out

all civilisation. Instead of men being occupied in supplying one another's wants today they are engaged in destroying not only the productivity of the enemy but also their own, under the scorched earth policy.

In normal times we used to regard a crore of rupees as a colossal sum. A battleship of the type of the "Prince of Wales" costs about 15 crores, and it is sent to the bottom of the sea in a few minutes. During a whole year the Government spends hardly 12 crores on education throughout India — barely three-quarters of the cost of a single battleship. A submarine boat will cost about 50 lakhs. With barely half this amount as capital the A. I. S. A. has provided work for years on end to about 3 lakhs of workers in over 13 thousand villages, distributing in wages over 15 lakhs of rupees amongst them. A single 16 inch gun on a battleship costs about 6 lakhs. Two to three such guns will more than pay for all the famine relief given by Government in a year all over India, the expenditure on which score is about 15 lakhs per year. Two shells fired from such a gun will more than pay the expenses of running the central office of the A. I. V. I. A. for a whole year. When we hear that ten bombers have been shot down it is equivalent to the loss of the whole capital of the A. I. S. A. What Great Britain spends during a single day on this war will more than pay the expenses incurred by all the Provincial Governments and the Central Government for fifteen years in India on the promotion of industries.

J. C. K.

NON-VIOLENCE IN EVOLUTION*

Scientific discoveries make books on the various sciences out of date within a short time of their publication. A student of medicine reading books on the aetiology of cancer, for instance, would go to the latest books on the subject, and reject one published two or even one decade ago. Books on surgery published fifty years ago, however valuable then, would not, at an old bookseller's, fetch even the cost of printing them. A monument of research and industry, Hume's History of England, is not read nowadays, as historical research since its publication has made many statements of fact inaccurate or untrue.

Not so however with books of spiritual science. Sage Patanjali gave his Yoga aphorisms centuries ago. Books about the date of Patanjali written fifty years ago would be displaced by later researches. But no commentary, provided it is written by one who has tried to carry out the aphorisms in actual practice, can be out of date, no matter when it was written. For each represents the result of the author's spiritual experience and growth, and every step towards the goal of self-realisation offers help and guidance to pilgrims on the path. Every such pilgrim is an experimenter in the laboratory of Truth which is Infinite. The discovery of Truth

will never be complete and any honest record of earnest striving has its value. It is from that point of view that this book¹, which reproduces chronologically all the most important writings of Gandhiji on the subject of Non-violence, is of the greatest value to those who will follow Truth at all costs and who recognise that Non-violence is the road to that pursuit. This is all the more so when one realises that Gandhiji's experiments in Truth and Non-violence are not only in pursuit of Truth but also in pursuit of aims which one describes as mundane. Prof. Toynbee, the celebrated Research Professor of International History, has in the monumental volumes of *A Study of History* drawn this distinction. "Gentleness" — which he says might equally well be called 'Non-violence' — looks a superficial negative label, but carefully examined it "covers more than one positive reality" and he reveals four distinct positive meanings of the term. Thus "at its lowest the practice of Non-violence may express nothing more noble or more constructive than a cynical disillusionment with the fruitlessness of a violence which has been previously practised *ad nauseum* without having produced the intended results. A notorious example of a Non-violence of this unedifying kind is the religious toleration which has been in vogue in the Western World from about the last quarter of the seventeenth century of the Christian era down to our own day. Alternatively, Non-violence may express a conviction that Man's divinely allotted role in the economy of the Universe is to adopt a patiently passive attitude towards a mundane scene on which it is God's exclusive prerogative to execute His divine will through His own action — which would be hampered and not assisted, if Man were to presume to intervene in what is wholly God's business. Such is, for example, the conviction that underlies the Non-violence of *Agudath Israel*. This second philosophy of Non-violence is as pious and as scrupulous as our first is unprincipled and cynical; but at the same time it resembles the Non-violence of disillusionment in being unconstructive. Non-violence may, however, also be practised as a means to some constructive end; and such an end, again, may be either mundane or 'other worldly'. A classic example of the practice of Non-violence for a mundane end is presented in Mahatma Gandhi's political tactics of Non-violent Non-cooperation. The aim of Mr. Gandhi and his followers is to obtain for the people of India the political boon of complete self-government; and the pursuit of this aim by these tactics is evidence of a high degree of intellectual and moral originality; for the aim in view has been valued at its present enormously current price in a Western Vanity Fair; and our Western nationalists have seldom or never abstained from resorting to violence — of heart, if not of hand — in their endeavours to gain possession of this coveted pearl. Mr. Gandhi's tactical recourse of Non-violence is therefore a noteworthy new departure in the political technique of a Westernized 'Great Society'; but it is not, of course, so great a departure as a

1 *Non-violence in Peace and War*.

*Foreword to *Non-violence in Peace and War* to be shortly published by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Price Rs. 4. Postage 10 As. extra.

practice of Non-violence for reasons which are not just tactical but are strategic. While Mr. Gandhi practises Non-violence because he considers this to be the most efficacious means of pursuing an aim that is mundane, the Non-violence of Jesus and Johann ben Zakkai is a reflection on the mundane plane, of a transference of the field of action from that mundane plane to another."

But Prof. Arnold Toynbee does not quite see the reason why Gandhiji has dared to experiment the method of Non-violence on the mundane plane. It is precisely because Gandhiji refuses to make any distinction between the mundane and the 'other-worldly' plane so far as the moral and physical laws which govern them are concerned. For him the outside universe is but a reflection of the inside universe, and he repeats time and again that "the universe is compressed in the atom. There is not one law for the atom and another for the universe." It is not only the eye of the poet that enables him

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour

but an actual spiritual experience that gives the conviction that moral principles have no meaning unless they can be made to serve as guides of conduct in the daily affairs of men. It is therefore as a steady growth and evolution of the meaning and implications of Non-violence that this volume deserves to be studied by all who aspire to practise it for mundane or ultra-mundane ends. There is no royal road to train individuals or communities in the difficult art of Non-violence, except, as he says, "through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon. The expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance and thorough cleansing of one's self of all the impurities." And then he reveals the tremendous superiority of the spiritual force over physical force: "If for mastering of the physical sciences you have to devote a whole lifetime, how many lifetimes may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual force that mankind has known? But why worry even if it means several lifetimes? For, if this is the only thing in life, if this is the only thing that counts, then whatever effort you bestow on mastering is well spent. Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you. The Kingdom of Heaven is Ahimsa."

To outward seeming quite a number of contradictions will be found in this book—as, for instance, were pointed out by that great Pacifist B. De Ligt who strongly criticised Gandhiji's participation in the Boer War and the First World War of 1914-18, which apparently is irreconcilable with his stubborn opposition to the present war and all wars. Thus there was a time when he felt it necessary to say: "I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country." Not that he visualised a Swaraj won by violence. "Under Swaraj of my dream there is no necessity for arms

at all," he said, but added: "But I do not expect that dream to materialise in its fulness as a result of the present effort,"—he meant the Khilafat Struggle of 1921—"because I do not consider myself advanced enough to be able to prescribe a detailed course of conduct to the nation for such preparation." Again and again he used to say in those days: "I have not yet the attainments for preaching universal non-violence with effect." In one sentence he summed up the reason why even as a votary of non-violence he did not preach non-participation in 1914-18: "I had no status to resist participation"—by status meaning the status that service of the country and active practice of the principle for 29 years have given him now. By sufficient service he hoped then to attain some day "the power and confidence to resist the Empire's wars and its war-like preparations." There was a time when he thought in terms of his duty as a unit, however humble, of the Empire, and said that so long as he enjoyed the peace and security that "Pax Britannica" gave, it was his duty to serve the Empire. Today he continues to enjoy that "peace and security", but the peace is the peace of the grave and the security is the security of abject slaves. His soul therefore rebels against the Empire which now to him is a synonym for iniquity and he has vowed incessant opposition to that Empire and its war. Even twenty years ago, he knew that India's impotence affects and corrupts the whole of mankind, but he realises now as never before the implications of that knowledge. These are no contradictions. There is no more contradiction between them than there is between the root and the stem and the bark of a tree and its leaves and its flowers and its fruits. The same sap runs through all as the same passionate pursuit of non-violence runs through Gandhiji's life as through all that he has thought and done, said and written. Let the student read, study, chew and inwardly digest all that is included in this volume, and he will find that there is revealed in it the organic growth of a vital rule of life as of a soul aspiring not only towards Self-realisation, but also towards the emancipation of mankind from strife and bloodshed until, to use the words of Prof. Toynbee, "Violence annihilates itself and leaves Gentleness alone in the Field."

Bombay, 15-5-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

May 31

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FRIENDLY ADVICE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Thus reasons a friend :

"Most people will agree with you that Britain's inability to play fair by India deprives them of the right to expect even our moral support. Ideologically also most people will agree with you that their only honourable course would be to withdraw from India. But inevitably the withdrawal will confront us with immense difficulties which you yourself have admitted. You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimise the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help or even submit to Japanese domination as they would have to, if that help were taken. They must be weaned, as far as possible, from hatred of the British. And then every effort must be made to secure Muslim support. This is your last and supreme effort to bring freedom to India. Let no step be taken in haste or without due preparation. The time is too critical to bear failure."

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me, I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea and that too at this juncture has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the War and to India's deliverance from the peril that is and the peril that is threatening. It is too my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualise what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst therefore I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice, before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible, till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease.

Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease — a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance.

Sevagram, 23-5-42

FOR RAJAJI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

There is no doubt that Rajaji is handling a cause which has isolated him from his colleagues. But his worst enemy will not accuse him of any selfish motive behind the extraordinary energy with which he has thrown himself into the controversy of which he is the author. It reflects the greatest credit on him. He is entitled to a respectful hearing. His motive is lofty. It is a noble thing to strive for Hindu Muslim Unity, equally noble to strive to ward off the Japanese intrusion. In his opinion the two are intertwined.

Hooliganism is no answer to his argument. The disturbances at his meetings are a sign of great intolerance. Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or having listened make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that nature has put upon our understanding, we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed to us, we must always keep an open mind and be ever ready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it, if there is any. I plead therefore with all who are disturbing Rajaji's meetings not to do so but to give him a patient and respectful hearing to which he is entitled.

The reader knows that I hold Rajaji to be in the wrong. He is creating a false atmosphere. He does not believe in Pakistan nor do the nationalist Muslims and others who concede the right of separation or secession. They and Rajaji say that that is the way to wean the Muslim League from the demand for separation. I am surprised that many Muslims rejoice over a concession of doubtful value. I see nothing but seeds of further quarrel in it. It should be enough to state the proposition that nothing can prevent the Muslim League from having it if the Muslims really want it. They will take it by the vote or the sword unless they will submit to arbitration. But all this can only happen when the British Power is entirely withdrawn and the Japanese menace has abated. Till then there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan or any other 'stan'. It is today Englistan and may be tomorrow Japanistan, if we do not take care. If all who consider India to be their home now and for ever will pull their full weight to deliver it from the present and the impending peril, and when both the perils are finally removed, it will be time to talk of Pakistan and other 'stan's and to come to an amicable decision or fight. No third party will or should decide our fate. It should be reason or the sword. Rajaji's method leads us to the blind alley unless his admirable and patriotic persistence opens a way unknown to him or any of us. Whatever the fate of different opinions, my plea is for mutual toleration and respect.

Sevagram, 24-5-42

INDIAN SOLDIERS RUN AMUCK?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I take the following from the report of the Secretary, B. P. C. C., on the shooting alleged to have taken place by soldiers of Indian Signal Corps on 17th and 18th instant at Nivodhai near Duttaparkar in Barasat subdivision, Bengal:

"A batch of Indian troops about 7 or 8, while engaged in sinking telephone posts entered the garden of Rabindranath Bose at about 1 P. M. on the 17th May, plucked fruits and willfully damaged green mangoes and jack fruits etc, whereupon, Rabindra and Shashindra protested against their conduct. The soldiers thereupon assaulted them and kicked Sashindra when he fell down. Sashindra was attended by Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar, a local medical man. The soldiers also raided the house of Hari Charan Das and Sashanka Das and damaged the cooking and other utensils and threatened the local people with dire consequences.

... "Pachu Gopal Mookherjee, President, Union Board, Suresh Chandra Dey (Honorary Magistrate) and Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar lodged the first information at Barasat Thana at about 5-30 P. M. and reported the matter to the S. D. O. Barasat and sought his protection. The S. D. O., thereupon, directed the Thana officer to post four constables at Nibodhai village in the morning of the 18th and 19th May. The complainants carried written instructions from the S. D. O. to the Thana officer, but unfortunately no police constable was found in the village on the 18th morning, when that unfortunate firing took place. ... Next day on the 18th May, the soldiers numbering about 25 came to the scene of occurrence with arms at about 7 A. M. Out of these men about 12 or 13 entered the Nibodhai village at 8-30 A. M. and started patrolling the streets using abusive language to the villagers and womenfolk and threatened them with their rifles and bullets. They, then, entered the tailoring shop of Ratan Das and assaulted him. After assaulting Ratan Das they again entered the garden of Robin Bose, knocked at the door and threatened to assault the female members of the house. The panic-stricken inmates having raised a hue and cry, a large number of villagers (40/50) assembled there to rescue them. Thereupon, the troops gave a signal to the other members of the corps who were waiting in the neighbourhood, when they also ran to the place of occurrence.

"Four or five local young men, namely, Sushil Kanjilal, Bejoy Kumar Mukherjee, Sambhu Nath Dutta and Santosh Nath approached the soldiers and requested them not to intimidate the innocent people and asked them to leave the place, whereupon they got enraged and assaulted Sushil Kanjilal on the head with the butt end of a gun, (who has since been removed to Calcutta Medical School Hospital for treatment). At this the villagers got frightened and tried to run away when Bejoy Mukherji was pushed down by the soldier and a tussle ensued between them, then he fell into the adjacent tank and the soldiers got hold of him and ducked him in water. The villagers, thereupon, being exasperated ran to his rescue and some of them pelted stones at the soldiers. They then left Bejoy in the tank and opened six rounds of shot as a result of which

Bejoy was wounded and fell down. Santosh Nath and Sambhu Dutta also received gun-shot wounds and have subsequently been removed to Calcutta Medical School for treatment. The condition of Santosh Nath is reported to be very serious. Immediately after firing the signallers left the place dragging the body of Bejoy towards the place where the military lorry was standing. After the soldiers had gone away, villagers began to search for the victim when Sudarshan Mukherji, Sripada Mukherji, Bojomohan Bose and others found Bejoy in a dying condition with intestine ripped open and groaning under the bush, near the railway home signal in a ditch close to Rabindra's garden. He was carried to the nearest Kalibari where he died saying that he was dragged in and trampled upon by the booted-soldiers on his chest and other parts of the body and was also bayoneted. He could say no more and he succumbed immediately.

"It was a deliberate and cold-blooded murder. The whole village seems to be exceedingly panic-stricken. The police did not arrive on the 18th morning although the S. D. O., Barasat, apprehending some trouble directed them to post constables at Nibodhai from the 18th morning. If the police authorities had been a bit more vigilant the catastrophe could have been averted.

"Santosh Nath who had since been lying in a precarious condition died on the 20th morning at Calcutta Medical School Hospital."

No comment is necessary on this wantonness on the part of the so-called defenders of India, assuming the truth of the statement.

Sevagram, 25-5-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The six questions that follow are from workers who endorse my plan for the withdrawal of the British Power. The answers have to be read in the light of the plan. The workers should know that no plan, however wise it may be, can produce the intended effect if it does not commend itself to those for whose benefit it is presented, or if they are too weak to follow it out. Now for my answers:

Not Right

Q. Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. - I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organisation or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical state, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators. This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it.

Q. In resisting unjust military or civil orders, is the primary motive, (a) protest against the

Government action? (b) alleviation of the peoples' sufferings? or (c) a preliminary step towards the capture of power?

A. The central point of my conception is non-violence. In trying to educate the people to be without the British or any power, the chief thing is to resist all injustice, no matter how or by whom it is perpetrated. Here resistance is not by way of protest, certainly not a preliminary step towards gaining power. I want thousands of people to resist injustice. If they all were to do so to seize power, they will never succeed. It is surely enough for them to resist the injustice they feel. It is in itself a duty.

Q. Do you expect individual Congressmen to offer resistance in cases where the villagers or general public are not prepared to come forward?

A. If I can speak for Congressmen I would say most emphatically "yes". People who are terror-struck have no gumption. Those who have, have to intercede even at the cost of their lives.

Self-Protection

Q. Shall we go to reason with the officials who refuse to allow the organisation of self-protective units? And if they do not listen, shall we still go on?

A. People have to protect themselves against officials, against dacoits and possibly Japanese. If they do not, they are doomed. Therefore they may not brook any interference with their preparation. But they may not bear arms without licence. What I have in mind is gymnastics, drill, lathi play and the like. The authorities are not likely to interfere with these practices. But if they do, the people affected may disregard prohibition and take the consequence.

Salt

Q. Villagers here are much troubled for want of salt which they used to get largely from Calcutta. If they defy the Salt Laws they can easily make sufficient stocks for the needs of the Province. Cattle in these parts are given no salt. If salt became free this serious defect could also be removed. May we advise the people to make all the salt they need for the Province? After the rains begin they will not be able to make salt.

A. Manufacture of salt for home consumption is covered by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. The ten mile radius at present is unworkable. I do think that in these hard times the restriction should be relaxed and as far as possible the people should be left to help themselves. The main revenue from salt is not likely to be affected by the laxity of administration in favour of the poor people. I would advise local adjustment with the authorities.

The idea underlying my plan, however visionary or even mischievous it may appear to be, is that if the setting given is non-violent and the workers understand and carry it out, the withdrawal of British authority can take place without much disturbance and certainly without the Japanese replacing that authority unless, as has been suggested, the popular mind is in favour of the Japanese.

While I was preparing this note, I received a letter from Rajen Babu who writes as follows about salt:

"During my tour I have made it a point to meet representatives of merchants and traders at every place I visit, with a view to ascertaining the position of stock of food-stuffs, kerosine oil and salt and other necessary articles of daily consumption. At every place it has been impressed on me, both by merchants and members of public, that a most serious situation is developing with regard to supply of salt. A big shortage in salt is apprehended at almost every place that I have visited and unless immediate steps are taken it may cause great hardships and sufferings to the people, particularly to the poor who very often have to depend only on salt to enable them to gulp the coarse food they can somehow manage to get. The steps to control the price of salt are ineffective. It is worse than useless to control the price of an article of vital necessity, without ensuring a regular supply of it. The price fixed remains only on paper and cannot be enforced unless there is arrangement to ensure a supply of the commodity. Despite the price fixed by the Government, salt sells at higher prices at many places particularly in mofussil. But what is feared is much more serious than mere high prices, viz., more or less total disappearance of salt from the market and grocers' shops. I am told that orders placed by the merchants are not executed by the people at the centres like Khewra and Shambhar. There is nothing like price control there and a lot more than the apparent price has to be paid by the merchants if they want to get a supply. It is said that this extra cost comes to something like Rs. 300/- to Rs. 400/- or even more per waggon in addition to the standard price of Rs. 1075/- for 550 maunds. At Calcutta although the price control has fixed Rs. 170 for 100 maunds the actual price paid by the buyers is Rs. 270/- This is the state of price control. The difficulty in securing a waggon is not the least of the difficulties that has to be encountered. With increasing difficulty in supply of waggons the prospect is dismal. The Government should take immediate steps to ensure a regular supply of salt: (a) by securing a regular supply of waggons, (b) by ensuring a just and fair distribution of the available stock among dealers, (c) by opening new sources of supply of salt, and (d) by removing all restrictions on the manufacture of salt from sea-water at sea-coast and from earth in the interior. It must be realised that dislocation of transport may make it impossible for salt to be carried from long distances and efforts should be made to make it available within manageable distances so that ordinary means of country transport like bullock carts, boats, pack bullocks, horses and mules may be employed for transporting it. With the monsoon already in sight it is already very late and any further delay in taking effective steps may mean untold sufferings."

I wish the authorities will listen to Rajen Babu and relax the restrictions, before it is too late and people suffer before actual war overtakes the land.

In Case of Requisition

Q. Land is being requisitioned for military aerodromes and villagers are being ordered to vacate. If no reasonable arrangements are being made for

the villagers should the orders be resisted? or should we resist in any case as we do not want the aerodromes which are in themselves a danger not a protection, and no arrangements can ever adequately compensate a peasant for his house and fields?

A. No resistance on the ground of all war resistance is contemplated in the present plan. Resistance is permissible [only if] villagers do not get equal facilities elsewhere in the shape of land and cottages. No monetary compensation can give evacuated people the land they will need. High-handedness should be resisted.

Sevagram, 22-5-42

Out of Touch

Q. Do you know, being confined in Sevagram, how much you are out of touch with the public? If you were not you would not talk of resisting the Japanese as you do. For the dislike of the British is so great that the man in the street is ready to welcome the Japanese.

A. I cannot endorse your proposition that I am out of touch with the public. Though I am confined in Sevagram I see all sorts of people and receive correspondence from every nook and corner of India. Probably, therefore, I am more in touch with the people than you can be though living in a big town. You have not the opportunity that I have of gauging the public mind. But let us grant that what you say is right, (I believe you are partially right,) my suppressing the true remedy will not alter the public mind. On the contrary, I am showing the futility of hatred. I am showing that hatred injures the hater never the hated. An Imperial Power cannot act otherwise than it has been doing. If we are strong the British becomes powerless. I am therefore trying to wean the people from their hatred by asking them to develop the strength of mind to invite the British to withdraw and at the same time to resist the Japanese. With the British withdrawal the incentive to welcome the Japanese goes and the strength felt in securing British withdrawal will be used for stemming the Japanese inroad. I endorse C. R. 's proposition that the millions of India can resist the Japanese even without the possession of arms, modern and ancient, if they are properly organised. I differ from him when he says that this can be done even when the British arms are operating without coordination when you force yourself on the British Power. Experience teaches us that hearty coordination and cooperation is impossible where mutual trust and respect are wanting. British presence invites the Japanese, it promotes communal disunion and other discords, and what is perhaps the worst of all, deepens the hatred born of impotence. Orderly British withdrawal will turn the hatred into affection and will automatically remove communal distemper. So far as I can see the two communities are unable to think or see things in their proper perspective as long as they are under the influence of the third power.

Sevagram, 23-5-42

LABOURERS AS CO-PARTNERS

Gandhiji has for years been saying that in industrial enterprises "workmen should be regarded as equal owners with the shareholders" and that "labour should have the same status and dignity as capital". In the midst of an acute industrial crisis he once seriously asked mill-owners to give to the workmen every year a fixed percentage of the mill's profit after all reasonable charges had been met. The suggestion, if adopted, would have ushered in an era of abiding peace between capital and labour. But that was not to be. That the suggestion, however, far from being either utopian or chimerical, was eminently practicable (provided the millowners' outlook underwent a little change,) is now proved by the following report from America published in the New York weekly *Time* dated 5th January, 1942:

"The plushiest employee profit-sharing plan in big corporation history last week was announced by Beach Aircraft Corp. (The biggest U. S. mass producer of heavy, twin-engined bomber trainers.) The scheme which was okayed with a whoop and a holler by Beech's 6,000 employers gives them one-half of all company profits. Distributions (50% cash, 50% U. S. Defence Savings Bonds) will be made every three months on the basis of the preceding quarter's earnings. Beech thereby expects to generate enough worker co-operation and efficiency at least to offset the cost of the stockholders."

This is no eyewash, for the Beech's is a prospering concern and is going through a boom period. "In the year ended September 30, Beech sales rose 240% to \$ 8,063,000, profits 600% to \$ 472,000. Both were all-time records." Again, "October and November sales almost equalled all those made last year; by next September sales will cross \$ 75,000,000." The labourers will thus be getting substantial sums. But whether the sums are substantial or otherwise, the underlying principle is sound, and will make the workers look upon the concern as their own.

The same issue of *Time* also contains the following news item of a somewhat similar nature:

"Another munitions-maker, Jack & Heintz, Inc. of Cleveland, also paid a remarkable bonus last week: \$ 650,000 to 800 employees. All employees are called 'associates'. They punch no time clocks, get monthly bonuses averaging \$ 30, free coffee, jazz music four hours daily, free hamburgers every Wednesday, will soon get free grub from a company cafeteria."

As regards Britain, a well-known British economist, Geoffrey Crowther (editor of *The Economist*) says in a book of his (*Economics for Democrats*) that "there is a profit-sharing arrangement in the mining industry by which the workers share immediately in any greater prosperity of the employers."

Why should something of the kind not be feasible of adoption in India? C. S.

By R. B. Gregg

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FACE THE FACTS

Some time ago commenting on a frank speech by Major General Molesworth I tried to show that even if we could be armed the game was not worth the candle at this very late stage. But some of us continue to cry for arms, and when there is no response we bravely say, "Well, we will fight without arms." So far as Government are concerned more frankness from them cannot be expected. In answering the remark: "We are unarmed. What can we do? Let the Government put arms in our hands and we will spring to the defence of India like one man", the Viceroy frankly said: "Were the people of Great Britain armed in June 1940? Were the people of Russia armed in June 1941? During the long agony of China had ordinary men arms in their hands? The answer is 'no'. The mass of the people have never carried arms in any country or in any modern campaign." He ignored the fact that in Great Britain, Russia and China, the mass of the people who were not armed in 1940 or 1941 are armed today, but his answer should leave one in no doubt that it is impossible for him to arm the mass of the people of India. A suicidal military and political policy makes it impossible for the British to do so, no matter what the cost and the consequences. In Malay the same policy was followed. Sir Richard Winstedt, formerly General Adviser to the Johore State, in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* scouts the suggestion that the Malays were "soft" or unpatriotic, asks how the Malays could be expected to defend their country when there were only two regiments led by officers with poor knowledge of Malays and their language, and says: "It is for the Imperial Defence Committee to explain the omission to raise more troops and provide a permanent nucleus of officers with a thorough knowledge of the Malay terrain, language and peoples. What must Malays think of that omission now? British prestige has had a staggering blow and quite the least we can do now is to refrain from criticism of those whom we were pledged to protect and whom we could not save and not to dream of reprisals against a country which, left by us in the lurch, may have to pretend collaboration with Japan."

Nothing can be more patent than this that they were either unable or unwilling to arm the mass of people in Malay and they are in the same predicament here. Then why not face the facts? The demand for withdrawal of the British power far from being intended to embarrass them is meant to indicate an honourable and dignified way to extricate themselves from the miserable mess they have made. If they depart they will have had the credit of having done the right thing. The Indians will then be free from one complication.

As for those of us who cry for more arms, we should realise that it is a cry for the moon, and it is best for us to educate and organise our people for non-violent non-cooperation. A writer in the

New York *Nation*, who is supposed to be a military expert, has made out a case for providing the people of Hitler-occupied Europe with arms, which should be rained on them from aeroplanes from America. "The weapons supplied must be simple enough," he says, "for untrained persons to operate and effective enough when employed with surprise and stealth to give the men temporary equality with German soldiers. The rifle does not possess the shock power required. The ideal weapons for counter-revolution are the submachine gun and the high power fragmentation grenade. Both are relatively simple to manufacture, easy to operate and deadly at close range." Whatever be the military knowledge of the writer, those in charge of the war in America certainly know better and they would not think of launching on the quixotic plan put forth in the article. It is impossible both selfishly and practically. America cannot afford, for naturally selfish reasons, to proceed on that wild goose chase. It would be easier for America to follow the plan with regard to India, but America and England know their business better. As for the poor people of vanquished Europe, if they tried to rise up in arms against Hitler, there would be far more death and destruction in the wake of their armed rebellion than there is today. But it is open to them to follow the way of non-violent non-cooperation. Nearly two million Poles are in Germany as agricultural labourers and the same number are in Russia which is fighting the war for democracy. And people from other countries are being drawn as combatants and non-combatants by Hitler. Would it not be easier for them, provided they had the will, to refuse all cooperation rather than rise up in revolt with the help of arms which may be supplied to them from America?

But whatever may or may not be possible for them, there is no doubt that that is the only way that is open to us, and also possible to us having in view the fact that we have received training, however imperfect, in the technique for several years. Both the authorities and we have to face the facts.

Sevagram, 24-5-42

M. D.

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Lawlessness in Sindh**HARIJAN**

Editor: MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, No. 19] ¹¹¹

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 24, 1942

[FIVE PICE

Notes**Deenabandhu Memorial**

I am glad to be able to inform the readers of *Harijan* that the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Sheth Ghanashyamdas Birla, who had asked me to go to Bombay for eight days for the purpose of finishing the Deenabandhu Memorial collections, have been crowned with full success. Only over Rs. 60,000 were collected in response to the appeal through the papers. The whole of the balance of five lacs was collected during the eight days' strenuous labour. Bombay has never disappointed me whenever I have gone there for collections. I am most grateful to the donors for their generosity. They have taken a great load off my mind. I am quite clear that they have never given to a better cause. The Memorial to Deenabandhu started by and at the wish of Gurudev became, on his death Memorial to Gurudev, in which the former merged. The object of both could only be identical. Subscriptions were required partly for the discharge of monies due by Shantiniketan and largely for the building etc. mentioned in the original appeal. I may mention that while the donations received included large sums from wealthy men they included also small sums from unknown persons from all over India. They were received from all communities, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus. I repeat the thanks on behalf of the fellow signatories and myself to the donors for their generous donations as also to the friends who organised the collection and laboured to make a success.

Harijan Collections

If the collections I make at railway stations and at evening prayer when I am out of Sevagram are any index to the progress of the removal of untouchability it must be very substantial, for I notice that the response is more liberal than before. Hardly a bystander at stations or a visitor to the prayer meeting refrains from giving his mite. Much need not be made of the response. But there can be no doubt that if the cause did not make any appeal, the response would be meagre, if any. Whereas it was hearty and willing. It gave me great joy as I studied the smiling faces of those who gave. The Bombay collection for the seven meetings was Rs. 4000. Each day's collection showed a substantial rise on the previous day. Thus the first day's collection was Rs. 205-5-6 and the last Rs. 1342-10-9.

On the way to Wardha, 18-5-42

Confusion

There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews' friendship was enough to tie me to the British people. But both he and I were fixed in our determination that British rule in India in any shape or form must end. Hitherto the rulers have said, "We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins." My answer now is, "Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy." I invite every Britisher who loves Britain, India and the world to join me in the appeal to the British Power and, if it is rejected, to adopt such non-violent measures as would compel the Power to comply with the appeal.

What Could Have Been Done?

Some Pressmen asked me in Bombay what could Sir Stafford have done in the absence of an agreement between the Congress and the League. I gave the answer. I do not know whether it has appeared anywhere. Any way it is better for the public to know what answer I gave to the question. Sir Stafford could have asked either the Congress or the League to form the cabinet. If he had done so, probably the party they entrusted with responsibility would have succeeded in having the cooperation of the other party. In any event the Government would then have dealt with the real representatives of their party rather than having their own nominees. I do not know that they made any such offer either to the Congress or the League. So far as the public know the negotiations did not break over the want of agreement between the two organisations but over differences with Sir Stafford as to what powers the British Government wanted to part with during the war.

Sevagram, 18-5-42

M. K. G.

Note

In a note in the last issue Gandhiji mentioned the editions of *Harijan* being published in various Indian languages. The Kanarese edition of *Harijan* was inadvertently omitted. It is being published by Shri Divakar from Hubli.

M. D.

BOMBAY RESPONDS GENEROUSLY

Bombay has enabled Gandhiji to fulfil a debt that had weighed on him for over a year. Deenabandhu Andrews died on the 5th of April, 1940, and an appeal for a memorial to him was issued by among others the Gurudeva and Gandhiji. Before even a lakh of rupees could be collected, the Poet was removed from our midst, and ever since his death Gandhiji had been worrying over the poor response to the appeal. The circumstances in which he decided to visit Bombay are now well-known.

The response was naturally expected, when Gandhiji himself decided to devote a week to the purpose, but there is no gainsaying the fact that with most of the donors regard for Gandhiji was a greater consideration than the purpose. A friend who was talking with Gandhiji the other day frankly said to him: "Gandhiji, you are backing the wrong horse." It was in order to correct this wrong impression that Gandhiji explained to more than one donor that the cause was worthy of their generous support.

"I am not exaggerating," he said, "when I say that Shantiniketan is worthy of a greater support than the Bangalore Research Institute for which Tata gave Rs. 30 lakhs. I wonder if the Research Institute is known anywhere outside India. But the Shantiniketan is known wherever the Poet's name is known, and known as an institution that inspired the Poet's great poetry. The Poet used to call it his toy or plaything, but his poetry would have been barren without the plaything. The Shantiniketan whose school of art and culture attracts students from far and near has produced painters and poets and scholars. There are among those who humbly serve it—a scholar like Kshitibabu and an artist like Nandababu, who are both unrivalled in their respective domains. And no institution of this type in India is managed with so little finance."

"Our devotion to the Poet will remain as long as we live. But how can we have the same devotion for Shantiniketan? How long will it last?"

"The institution which inspired the Poet received in its turn inspiration from the Poet, and you may be sure that there are people there who will devote their lifetime to its service. Shantiniketan is a romance. It grew out of the Poet's father's idea to found a home of peace and culture. It is a tragedy that monied men, who have gained so much from Shantiniketan, do not appreciate its full worth. The Poet is an asset for India and for the world for all time, and it is the duty of monied men to put his institution on a sound basis."

If Gandhiji appreciates Shantiniketan so much as a home of art, why does he himself have *ashrams* of a different character? For the simple reason that art is the need of quite a fair number of our people and it must be fulfilled in a clean, wholesome and inexpensive way. Shantiniketan, with its branch at Shriniketan, does it. That was

what attracted Deenabandhu Andrews to it, and he identified himself with it, and he became its champion collector.

"You can never give too much to Shantiniketan," said Gandhiji summing up his impassioned appeal.

"But," some one said, "we are in the midst of turmoil. These are not times for money collection. Can't we wait until we have won our freedom?"

"Rabindranath could not wait to come to the world until freedom was won," said Gandhiji in a neat retort.

Bombay, 18-5-42

M. D.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Difference

Q. You have repeated in your interview to the Press in Bombay what you have said often that nothing can prevent the Muslims from having what they want unless the objectors would fight over the issue. What is the difference between you and Shri Rajgopalachari's attitude?

A. Though he has quoted me in his support I see the same difference between him and me that there is between chalk and cheese. He yields the right of secession now to buy unity in the hope of keeping away the Japanese. I consider the vivisection of India to be a sin. My statement amounts to the enunciation of the proposition that I cannot prevent my neighbour from committing a sin. Shri Rajgopalachari would be party in the sin, if the neighbour chooses to commit it. I cannot be party. What is more, I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up. In its presence both Hindus and Muslims and for that matter all seemingly conflicting or disgruntled interests and elements will look to it for support and will get it. Their interest is greater than the independence of their country. No one need throw my other statement in my face, viz., that there is no independence without unity. I do not withdraw a word of it. It is an obvious truth. From its contemplation I have discovered the formula of inviting the British power to withdraw. Their withdrawal does not by itself bring independence. It may induce unity or it may lead to chaos. There is also the risk of another power filling in the vacancy if it is there. If, however, the withdrawal is orderly and voluntary the British not only gain a moral height but secure the ungrudging friendship of a great nation. I wish all conflicting elements and interests will make a combined effort to rid India of foreign domination. If they do not, any understanding with them will be like a house built on sand. Fear of the Japanese occupation of India has blinded C. R. to the obvious truth. Independence sheds all fear—fear of the Japanese, of anarchy, and of the wrath of the British lion.

Sevagram, 18-5-42

NEED OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

[The following is a free rendering of Shri Vinoba's address to a national school at Tumsar:]

The greatest need in our education today is science. India may be said to be primarily an agricultural country, but she cannot maintain herself wholly on farming. European countries are mainly industrial, and yet France can show $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land per head; whereas we in India own land to the extent of only an acre and a quarter per head. In America, the wealthiest country in the world, both agriculture and industry go hand in hand on a large scale. She is spending 55 crores daily on the war. According to our standard of living it would cost 5 crores daily to feed our population of 40,00,00,000. America could, therefore, feed us for 11 days with what she is spending daily on destruction! Our income from land per capita is Rs. 50 to 60 per annum and from industry Rs. 12. There is no difference between our land income and that of England, but the average income from industry in England is Rs. 512 as against our Rs. 12 per head!

In order to change this piteous state of affairs all our teachers, students and the general mass of people must take to handicrafts and become experts therein. And one cannot become an expert without scientific knowledge in the subject concerned.

Our kitchens should, for example, be experimental laboratories. Those who work in them should have a knowledge of dietetics, and thereby know what type and what amount of food is required by different persons.

Everyone has to use a latrine, but few have proper knowledge of sanitation and hygiene which is essential for the health of society. What is now wasted could be turned into wealth, if only we had the requisite knowledge.

Why disease attacks one is a matter of research; likewise how it should be treated and what should be done in order to prevent recurrence. No adequate answers can be found without scientific knowledge.

We may spin and weave, and yet if we are unacquainted with all the processes of khadi production, we are not far removed from the factory automaton.

Shri Vinoba said he had been told that boys in the Tumsar School were not one whit behind those of other institutions in passing examinations in English, but he wondered what special pride could be taken in this. It would be far better if they had a good knowledge of hygiene, sanitation, physics and chemistry than English. And this knowledge could easily be assimilated in craft-work.

But while the greatest stress must be laid on scientific knowledge in regard to our daily lives and work, the spiritual side was on no account to be neglected. Language is the medium for instruction in both spheres, but it is a mere messenger in either case. For example, we will not sit down and cry if our spinning wheel goes out of order or a scorpion stings us. We will apply our scientific knowledge to remedy the wheel or decrease the pain. In the same way we ought to

cultivate the realisation of the detachment of the soul (*atma*) from matter. This detachment must grow and become a habit with us.

A true school is that where work is scientifically done and the student understands the whys and wherefores of each action. Otherwise the institution is a mere factory. An ideal school may cost a little more to run, but the effort will be amply repaid in the mental and moral growth of the students and in the quality of their output. The minutest details will be attended to in every department of life. Nothing will be forgotten, there will be no cramming, and craft-work will be fascinating. If the teachers are able to make the students take a live interest in their work, nothing will be humdrum, nothing will be a burden. The teacher must be able to impart knowledge from the seemingly little things of everyday life. National schools should be made attractive, and it is the duty of parents to send their children there.

Children are a nation's wealth, but today they are underfed. The minimum requirements in diet should be made available to them in our national schools, or else how can we expect them to work?

(From *Khadi Jagat*)

A. K.

PURPOSEFUL POLITICS

(Continued from last issue)

Government

Even granting that we obtain this freedom what shall we do with it? Government is the delegated permanent part of the people's self. Therefore a free people will strive to control the activities of this their better half. Politics is the lever with which this great instrument is switched off or on. This switch board must be operated under the will of the people. A Government properly conceived should be the largest partner in the business of the people, the senator of the people's education, the arbitrator to settle their disputes, the communities' social panchayat—in short, the head, arms, legs and heart of the nation. For any Government to so function it will have to be imbued with the spirit and culture of the people. The Britishers have consciously kept themselves apart from the people. Hence it is impossible for them to play this role. Only a free people can thus be at the helm of their own ship of State and direct her course towards national prosperity.

It is against human nature to expect Great Britain to govern India for India's good. Hence it is not fair even to Britain to let her continue in this impossible position. The purpose of our politics is to get control of these key positions in the country so as to serve the needs of the masses better and help them to develop themselves to the utmost capacity they have been endowed with.

(Concluded)

J. C. K.

By R. B. Gregg

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HARIJAN

May 24

1942

LAWLESSNESS IN SINDH

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Prof. Ghanashyam assisted by Shri Assandas, a worker in Thar Parkar, has recently visited the area affected by the Hurs' rebellion. He has prepared an elaborate report of which he has sent me a copy. The following is a condensed summary of the report in the Professor's own language:

"Not many people in Sindh realise the grave situation that has arisen owing to the activities of the Hurs. Hurs are followers of the Pir of Pagaro who has been arrested by Government and is said to be under detention in Nagpur. All his followers are not Hurs. His following is said to run in lacs. The Hurs are mostly concentrated in Sanghar, Sinjhora and Shahdadpur Talukas. They are considered to be a criminal tribe and several of them were kept in criminal settlements. These were abolished some years ago. But they were still under orders to report themselves regularly to the police. The Hurs believe that their Pir has been arrested on the false reports of the police against him. They nurse the grievance that none of them is allowed to interview him. They are said to complain of police oppression in having to report themselves daily at police stations.

"After the arrest of the Pir of Pagaro, search of his house near Sanghar and destruction by fire of the huts attached to the bungalow where the Pir's followers used to gather, have so enraged the Hurs that they have started on a fierce campaign, as a challenge to Government, of murders, dacoities, attacks on railway stations, destruction of property in P. W. D. bungalows, cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, making breaches in canals etc. There is not a day when reports of these criminal activities are not received. They were in the beginning mostly confined to Sanghar, Sinjhora and Shahdadpur Talukas, but have now spread to other parts of Sindh also, specially the Khipro Taluka which adjoins Sanghar Taluka. The Hurs may be said to have risen in rebellion against the Government with a view to get the Pir of Pagaro released. They have such an intense faith in him that they are prepared to sacrifice their all and even their lives for his sake. It is now more than six months since the Pir of Pagaro was arrested. In the beginning of this period the frequency of the criminal activities of the Hurs was not as great as now. With the passage of time their activities have assumed not only greater frequency but have extended to other talukas than the original three. The Hurs have started their own Government. Not only have they appointed a leader whom they call their King but have appointed commanders, captains etc.. They are said to have divided themselves into groups, and assigned separate jurisdiction

to each group. Their activities were in the beginning directed against Government and those whom they considered as enemies of the Pir of Pagaro or who in any way aided Government against them. But it appears they have changed their tactics and are now attacking all and sundry. No one seems to be free from their attacks, whether he be a zamindar or a *sethia*, Hindu or Muslim, a high paid official or a petty *kotar* or *beldar*, rich or poor, innocent or guilty. Even women are not spared. There is a tradition that Hurs do not attack women or innocent persons. But it is said latterly young and mischievous elements among them have thrown the old traditions to the winds and spare no one. With a view to make their activities more effective, they have started a deliberate move for collecting rifles, guns, ammunitions, clothes and money. Latterly their attacks in many cases have been directed against those who are in possession of these things. In this way they are said to have collected many guns and a large amount of money-cash or ornaments. They organise their attacks in military fashion and are on occasions dressed in Khaki shirts and shorts. When the Khipro-Sanghar bus was attacked on the 16th April, the Commander of the groups was not only dressed in Khaki but wore a hat also. Those who attacked ex-military zamindar Beantsing near Shahpur Chakar were also clad in military dress. This put Khalsa Beantsing off guard. He approached to greet them thinking they were some military soldiers. They attack and shoot under orders. They are also said to be levying taxes from zamindars and merchants. Threats are given to them that their 'Kharas' of wheat would be burnt or they would be dealt with in some other way if they did not pay taxes to them, as they declare themselves to be the Government in those areas. It is said that many people do yield to their threats as otherwise not only their property but even their lives are at stake. There is a general belief in the affected areas that Government are powerless to protect those who render aid to the authorities or who refuse to submit to the dictates of the Hurs. Several persons who have acted thus have been murdered or been targets of other attacks. People are in a state of sheer helplessness. It must not be supposed that Hurs are responsible for all the crimes that are now being committed in Sindh or even in the above talukas. Taking advantage of the situation created by the Hurs several unsocial and criminal elements, of which there is an abundance in Sindh, have let themselves loose, thinking either that the suspicion of their crimes would fall on the Hurs or the police would not take effective steps against them being pre-occupied with the Hur menace. The two main streams of criminal activities: one of the Hurs and the other of non-Hur criminals, have combined into a mighty current which has now flooded the whole of Sindh in general and the above talukas in particular. The enormity of the situation can be realised from the fact that normal functioning of the Government machinery in this area has ceased. In the Sanghar Taluka all the police posts are said to have been

abolished and only one police station has been retained in the Taluka Headquarter, for fear of their being attacked and overpowered by the Hurs and their rifles being taken away. The police parties that go out for investigation of crimes return to the headquarter before sunset. Being afraid of attack at night, they do not venture to do their normal work after sunset. The withdrawals of police posts and the return of police parties to Taluka Headquarter before sunset have so emboldened the Hurs and other elements that they think the British Government has ceased to exist for them. Like the police, the normal functioning of the Revenue Department has also to some extent ceased. The *tapadars*, I was informed, find it very hazardous to move out in 'Tapas' and so they are working in Taluka Headquarters. All revenue collection is done at the Taluka Headquarters and not at the *tapadar's deras*, as is normally done. One *tapadar* was robbed of his revenue collection; two *kotars* were killed. It was said that one mukhtiarkar had to go under police escort for remission work and had to change his dress for that of an ordinary rustic to escape detection as an official. Officials and subordinates are so terror-stricken that they do not function as they would normally do. Even the District Magistrate has to guard himself very strongly during his movements. It was said that trees have been cut off from near his bungalow lest dacoits under cover of these make an attack on him. Even when he goes to play tennis in the club near his bungalow, he has to go heavily protected. Armed police men are stationed near the tennis court and round about the club. Camel-men who carried the kit of Deputy Collector were threatened with dire consequences. They reported the matter and were given strong armed escort. Similar is the fate of the Public Works Department in the affected area. P. W. D. bungalows have been attacked. There is no safety even for zamindars who keep themselves protected with arms as they are being now selected for attacks with a view to rob them of their guns and ammunition.

"The Government have taken some measures to bring the situation under control. Special police has been stationed in hundreds in the affected areas. A special District Magistrate and a special District Superintendent of Police have been put on the duty to suppress the Hur menace, with jurisdiction over both the Thar Parkar and Nawabshah Districts, as the area affected forms part of both these districts. Military has been sent to aid the police. The Sindh Assembly passed a special Hur Menace Act in secret session to meet the situation, setting aside ordinary procedure of criminal law in the matter of security proceedings and trials for scheduled offences against Hurs and those who aid them. All these measures have so far proved ineffective in bringing the situation under control. The things are going from bad to worse. The police is concentrated in Taluka Headquarters and a large portion of it is used in guarding Government offices and officers. It was complained that it was not sufficient for the task before it. The offences are so

many that it is not possible for it to trace each one. The military simply gives patrol rounds at times. These have ceased to create any awe among the Hurs and so have become ineffective in suppressing their rising. The public will be surprised to learn that up to this time, most of the arrests in connection with specific offences in the affected area are those of 'non-murids', that is those who do not follow the Pir of Pagaro. I have stated above that some unsocial and criminal elements other than Hurs have, taking advantage of the situation, started indulging in crime. Some of these elements have been arrested, but so far as the Hurs are concerned, who are directly connected with any specific offence, there has been almost no arrest, compared to the long list of the offences committed. It is true a large number of Hurs, which is estimated to be over fifteen hundred, have been roped in, but they have been arrested not as a result of pursuit in specific offences, but were rounded up with a set plan of which they were not aware, on the occasion of their reporting their presence to police as most of them are required to do.

"None, or almost none, of those who are absconding and who are said to be responsible for murders, dacoities, robberies etc. have been arrested."

The Government machinery has evidently broken down. The real remedy is for Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allabux and his fellow-ministers to resign. These should form a peace-brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading these erring countrymen to desist from the crimes. A deputation known to Pir Pagaro should visit him and induce him to issue unequivocal instructions to his followers to stop their murderous activities. This should not be on condition of release. If he is aggrieved he is entitled to an inquiry. The Government should take the public into their confidence. All this can be done without the resignation of Congressmen and the ministers, it may be urged. My answer would be that the resignations are necessary as proof of the earnestness of the members and the Khan Bahadur and his co-ministers. If they remain in the Assembly they cannot give undivided attention to their task. The decisive reason, however, for my recommendation is that there should be an admission of their helplessness to do anything effective through the Assembly to put a stop to these rebellious activities. That should be an earnest of their desire to make room for those who think they can deal with the grave situation with better effect. The resignations must produce a healthy effect among the people. The selflessness and courage of resigners is likely to prove infectious and induce others to join them. The murder of Seth Sitaldas, a member of the Assembly, regrettable though it is in every respect, pales into insignificance in face of Prof. Ghanashyam's gruesome report. Let the murder serve as a spur to the other members to go among the Hurs and court murder in the act of weaning them from their unlawful and inhuman activities.

On the way to Wardha, 18-5-42

[P. S.

Since writing the above, I have heard about the terrible railway accident resulting in several deaths including that of Sir Gulam Hussain Hidayatulla's son. The shooting by the Hurs thereafter shows the state of desperation they have reached. This emphasises the recommendation I have made. Nothing short of such heroic action will bring the Hurs to their senses. Frightfulness will only make matters worse. I hope that all parties will join in the attempt to rid Sindh of the spreading rebellion.

Sevagram, 19-5-42

M. K. G.]

IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL

The following are the questions put by a representative of *The News Chronicle* (London) to Gandhiji, [Bombay, 14-5-42] and the latter's replies to them :

1. Q. You have recently asked the British to withdraw from India. Do you think it possible in the present circumstances for them to withdraw all at once? To whom are they to entrust the administration?

A. It has cost me much to come to the conclusion that the British should withdraw from India, and it is costing me still more to work out that conclusion. It is like asking loved ones to part, but it has become a paramount duty. And the beauty and the necessity for withdrawal lie in its being immediate. They and we are both in the midst of fire. If they go, there is a likelihood of both of us being safe. If they do not, Heaven only knows what will happen. I have said in the plainest terms that in my proposal there is no question of entrusting the administration to any person or party. That would be a necessary consideration, if the withdrawal was part of a settlement. Under my proposal, they have to leave India in God's hands—but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in the place of the false one we see.

2. Q. How is your policy of non-embarrassment reconcilable with this advice?

A. My policy of non-embarrassment remains intact in terms in which I have described it. If the British withdraw, surely there is no embarrassment; not only so, they become eased of a tremendous burden, if they would calmly consider the meaning of the enslavement of a whole people. But if they persist, well knowing that they are surrounded by hatred, they invite embarrassment. I do not produce it by stating the truth, however unpalatable it may appear for the moment.

3. Q. Already there are signs of civil insecurity; and would not life be even more insecure, were the present administration suddenly to withdraw?

A. Of course, there is civil insecurity, and I have already confessed that insecurity is likely to increase very much only to give place to real security. The present insecurity is chronic and therefore not so much felt. But a disease that is not felt is worse than one that is felt.

4. Q. Were the Japanese to invade India, what would your advice be to the Indian people?

A. I have already said in my articles that it is just likely that the Japanese will not want to invade India, their prey having gone. But it is equally likely that they will want to invade India in order to use her ports for strategic purposes. Then, I would advise the people to do the same thing that I have advised them to do now, viz. offer stubborn non-violent non-cooperation, and I make bold to say that, if the British withdraw and people here follow my advice, then non-cooperation will be infinitely more effective than it can be today, when it cannot be appreciated for the violent British action going on side by side.

THE BOMBAY INTERVIEW

After a lapse of nearly three years, Gandhiji gave the newspaper representatives in Bombay a political interview. He is so much possessed by his latest idea—the suggestion to the British to withdraw from India—that he readily agreed to meet the press, if only to be able to explain the implications of the suggestion. The whole of the Bombay press was represented, and it is gratifying to note that they confined themselves to strictly relevant and important questions. I must give for the readers of *Harijan* an authentic report.

Arbitration

"Would you review the situation created by the Allahabad A. I. C. C. meeting? What would you say regarding Rajaji's quoting your words regarding Pakistan in support of his latest move?"

"I would leave the Allahabad resolutions to themselves. C. R. has quoted me correctly, and I repeat that, if Muslims want anything—no matter what it is—no power on earth can prevent them from having it. For the condition of refusal will be to fight. Supposing Muslims ask for something which non-Muslims do not want to give or could not give, it means a fight. This applies to both the communities. If the Hindus want a thing and if they are all united in the demand, no non-Hindus can resist them, unless they want to fight. But my hope is that some day or other all parties will come to their senses and not insist on their demands being accepted, and consent to go to arbitration. It is an age-long method and a civilised method, and I hope it will be accepted.

"But it is from the frustration of every effort made to bring about unity by me among many others, that has arisen the, for me, logical step that not until British power is wholly withdrawn from India can there be any real unity, because all parties will be looking to the foreign power. For the time being it is British, but it may be French, Russian, Chinese, even then it would be the same thing. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that real heart-unity, genuine unity, is almost an impossibility unless and until British power is withdrawn and no other power takes its place, that is to say, when India not only feels but is actually independent without a master in any shape or form. Nevertheless I shall try and welcome every effort for peace, well knowing that it is likely to be fruitless."

Non-violent Non-cooperation

Q. "There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-cooperation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea?" was the next question.

A. "It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-cooperation, and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood Japanese arms—or any combination of arms—can be sterilised. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance."

"But," promptly came the question, "unadulterated non-violent non-cooperation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?"

"I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-cooperation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-cooperation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-cooperation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore, it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-cooperation. But if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organisation, wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed."

Scorched Earth Policy

Q. "Would you advise non-violent non-cooperation against scorched earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?"

A. "Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it, for I think it is ruinous, suicidal, and unnecessary—whether India believes in non-violent non-cooperation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops, I may be obliged to leave, because I cannot or care not to defend them. I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Khaliphs issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed those instructions."

Q. "But what about factories—especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?"

A. "Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseeds. I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence." Gandhiji continued: "I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw."

"I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore, this ordered disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore, if I find that all the best effort fails, I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property."

No Moral Support to Britain or America

Q. "Can India give her moral sympathy or support to either of the parties to the war?" was the next question.

A. "My own personal view is well-known. And if I can convert India to my view, there would be no aid to either side; but my sympathies are undoubtedly in favour of China and Russia."

Q. "But what about Britain?"

With quiet determination Gandhiji said: "I used to say that my moral support was entirely with Britain. I am very sorry to have to confess that today my mind refuses to give that moral support. British behaviour towards India has filled me with great pain. I was not quite prepared for Mr. Amery's performances or Sir Stafford Cripps's Mission. These have, in my estimation, put Britain morally in the wrong. And, therefore, though I do not wish any humiliation to Britain—and therefore no defeat—my mind refuses to give her any moral support."

Q. "What about America?"

A. "I expressed my opinion some time ago that it was a wrong thing for America and unfortunate for the world peace that America, instead of working—as she could have worked—for world peace, identified herself with war."

Q. "But was there any alternative for her?"

A. "I am sure she would have, if she had intended, brought about peace. But it is my firm opinion that she did not use her opportunity. I know that I have no right to criticise such a big nation. I do not know all the facts that determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other, opinion has forced itself upon me that America could have remained out, and even now it can do so if she divests herself of the intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war, unless they put their own houses in order, while making a fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia, and remove the colour-bar. They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and protecting civilisation and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety."

Arbitration on Indo-British Question

An English correspondent, keen on finding a solution or a way out, put a most pertinent question at the end: "Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem? And if so, of what sort?"

A. "Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration. How to bring that arbitration about, I do not know. But if the British rulers will accept the principle, it should not be impossible to find impartial arbitrators, though I admit it is a tremendously difficult problem to find impartial arbitrators in this case."

Q. "But you may say the same thing about finding arbitrators on the domestic question too?"

A. "No. It is a comparatively simpler thing. Where British power is concerned it has such great

influence and power—and rightly so—it would be difficult to get hold of arbitrators who would not be biased in favour of Great Britain, and deliver a fearless and just award."

Q. "Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of Independence?"

A. "No, not on the question of Independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of Independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question. But, as I have said, it is a most difficult question. If ever there is a real adjustment, it will come only when Britain feels that it is wrong to rule over another nation. But when that conviction goes home, they won't need arbitration—we in India won't. But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side—it can be done only if India's Independence is recognised."

Q. "Why did you not go to America in 1931, even though you were pressingly invited by Bishop Fisher?"

A. "Because I had no faith in myself. The invitation was very pressing indeed, and the offer was sincere, and I could easily have spared a fortnight, but I had no faith that I would be able to do any good to India. It would have been a nine days' wonder. I would be lionised and torn to pieces. The American people would listen to you, lionise you, but would go their own way. Gurudeva had been there, Vivekanand had been there, and his followers are still there. But the soul of America is untouched because of her worship of 'the golden calf'. As a people, they are, after all, is said and done, worshippers of Mammon."

"Does not America send her troops to India for a personal and selfish motive?" was the last question which revealed the sentiment of the common man in the street.

Gandhiji, correcting the questioner, said: "I suggest a better way of putting the question: 'Is it not disastrous for foreign armies to come to India when India has sufficient man-power?' If you put the question like that, my answer is: 'Decidedly so.'"

Bombay, 18-5-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, No. 18]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1942

[FIVE PICE

LIFE OR DEATH?

A correspondent writes :

"Gandhiji's article on Foreign Soldiers has been interpreted by various people in various ways. For instance, the sentence, 'The Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races', is innocuous enough. But some of my friends here say: 'This is nothing short of a curse pronounced by Mahatmaji. He thinks what is happening is just punishment for Britain's sins, and if she is defeated she will have deserved it.' Some say: 'Mahatmaji wants Britain to be defeated and sees nothing but good for India in Britain's defeat. He would seem to favour a Japanese invasion.' On the contrary you have often said that we cannot wish for Britain's defeat, and Pandit Jawaharlal has said that the victory of Nazism and Fascism would mean impenetrable darkness on earth.

Now this theory of a just nemesis cuts both ways. We have been slaves all these years. Must Britain's coming in India be taken to be a just punishment for our sins? The well-to-do orthodox say that the untouchables are being punished for their sins. Even so the British may say we are being punished for our sins. The theory of a just nemesis can thus be easily used against us."

There is a lot of confusion in this letter. As the correspondent himself has admitted the sentence quoted is innocuous, though in the last paragraph of his letter he contradicts himself. The sentence quoted summarises in a nutshell the facts of history. Look at any history of the British Empire, and you will find that what Gandhiji has said is but a mild indictment. I need not make more than a passing reference here to the dark record of the East India Company, the horrors of the "Sepoy Mutiny" and the annexations that followed. Need I narrate the story of the West Indies where "the Negroes brought from Africa were exposed for sale under the British flag and sent to serve European masters all over the new world"? Nor need I narrate the story of the series of Kaffir Wars with Basutos, Zulus, Matabele. "The Kaffirs were defeated, but they proved much too virile a people to go under as the blacks of Australia or the redskins of North America did;" the blacks in Australia were exterminated, but the "primary problem of policy is now the desire to keep the yellow man out of the vast open spaces of Australia"; not until a whole series of wars did the Maoris of New Zealand, "these contumacious people learn their place in the British scheme of things"; and consolidation in the Pacific naturally led to the annexation of the Fiji Islands; the scramble for

grubbing South Africa reached its height in 1885 when it was solemnly legalised by a conference of the European Powers which met at Berlin, where all bound themselves to go ahead with the partition of Africa in order "to further the moral and material well-being of the native population"; then come the "treaties" with the native chiefs and the story of Kenya and Rhodesia where "the natives were herded into 'reserves' and the fertile land handed over to white settlers." "In China it was for the moral benefit of the Chinese that Britain used armed force to compel China to buy opium and to open China to outside world trade. Some 300,000 square miles were added to the British Empire in the nineteenth century, and "much of this expansion had unfortunately to be achieved by the use of force against the original inhabitants — black, brown, or yellow — of the square miles in question." This led to rivalry and bickerings ultimately leading to the world war, in which Britain was victorious and Britain's share of the spoils was tremendous. There was unrest everywhere — among the vanquished; in India; in Egypt; in Ireland; in China; among the natives of various parts of Africa. "It was clear," sums up Horrabin, "that there would have to be more and more repression, more deals with the capitalist classes of the Dominions, more Pacts with allies, bigger and bigger armaments."

The building up of the Empire was the beginning of the end. The war of 1914-1918 was won, but peace was lost. Instead of humbling the victors it intoxicated them.

"Not the faintest attempt was made to be merciful or fair or even decently polite to the vanquished foe... Even so unexceptionable an English economist as Mr. Maynard Keynes pointed out the insanity of demands that might have put any businesslike robber to the blush... In intention and appearance the peace registered the defeat and downfall of the German Empire. But perhaps some historian of the future viewing these things in surer perspective may decide that in the context of civilisations, the defeat was not German, but British or Anglo-American... If ever it could have been said of a whole nation that it was not itself, that description would have applied to Britain in the time immediately following the Armistice... The wildest extravagances of sentiment and conduct were in vogue. In this shell-shocked atmosphere things were perpetrated which almost suggested that Britain herself had gone Prussian. Frightfulness in India, frightfulness in Ireland."

This is what a Liberal historian Esme Wingfield-Stratford has written. He is not an enemy of the Empire, he has even defended the benevolent intentions of Britain, but British behaviour after the war

sickened even him, and in one sentence he has summed up his worst fears: "The dragon's teeth that had been sown did not sprout all in a moment." He refrains from discussing the complications and cross-currents of the daily changing situation, but grandiloquently sums up in the self-satisfied way of the benevolent British Imperialist: "Mankind has to choose between two ways, one of Empire, which is now that of the Totalitarian Powers, the other of Freedom, which is our British way, so long as Britain preserves that truth to herself which is the soul of her civilisation. The choice is in the deepest sense between life and death." (*The Foundations of British Patriotism*) One word of comment on this. It is absolute truth that the Empire way is the way of death, the Freedom way is the way of life. Britain is still going right ahead along the Empire way, and in asking Britain to withdraw from India and to disgorge her ill-gotten gains Gandhiji is asking her to choose even at this late hour Freedom's way or the way of Life.

The sentence that Gandhiji has written has almost a literal echo in another British writer, Middleton Murry, a fellow-pacifist:

"The moral debacle of the blockade and of Versailles plunged me into a condition of despair concerning human destiny out of which I struggled only after five long years, and then only by way of a mystical illumination. My faith such as it is is not primarily a faith in this world. Nevertheless the most transcendent faith must return to earth. It is here on the sweet and violated earth that we must struggle that the good may prevail. If the war of 1914-18 and the shameful peace which ended it appeared to me 20 years ago so nakedly evil, so beyond all possibility of justification, that it weighed like lead upon my soul for five long years, is it possible that the consequences of this crime against man, this sin against God, shall be expiated without a terrible humiliation for my country? I do not pretend to answer. But I ask myself the question again and again. There is repentance; and there is humiliation. I believe that the salvation of democracy lies in repentance." (*Defence of Democracy*)

I suppose that makes Gandhiji's meaning clear beyond the shadow of a doubt. Gandhiji does not wish for a Nazi or Japanese victory any more than do Esme Wingfield-Stratford and Middleton Murry. But he shares their wholesome fear, and he has, if I may say so, an intuition that, if Britain does not repent in the way he has suggested, she will be humiliated.

Remains the last question. Is the statement about a just nemesis double-edged? Is there any justice in the criticism that the statement sounds like that of the orthodox Hindus that the untouchables are suffering for their sins, or of Britain that India is suffering for her sins? The statement about a just nemesis lies ill in the mouth of those whom God uses as instruments of punishment. Nemesis would herself mock viciously at Hitler, if he said that he was being used by God to punish iniquitous Britain. The untouchables may have sinned, but we have been vastly deeper sinners and, if we do not atone for our sin, it is Dr

Ambedkar whom God will ultimately use to destroy Hinduism. When Gandhiji said that if untouchability remains Hinduism perishes, he did not pronounce a curse on Hinduism, any more than he has now done on Britain. Hinduism can still save itself from extinction by purging itself of untouchability, as Britain still can by wiping out the sin of Empire and retiring in an honourable and repentant manner from India and other territories. The dragon's teeth that had been sown are now sprouting, and the frightful crop may have to be reaped in a manner never reaped before. The atonement cannot be done *after* the war. It has to be done *today*. The way of Empire is death, the way of Freedom is Life. Which shall she choose?

On the way to Bombay, 10-5-42 M. D.

MAGANWADI CONVOCATION

The A. I. V. I. A. held its convocation at Maganwadi, Wardha, on 29-4-42. Shri Vinoba Bhawe presided. The Secretary's report showed that

"Training given in Maganwadi is divided into two main groups: oil-pressing and paper-making. The A. I. V. I. A. has a three year plan for expanding the *ghani* industry in the country with a capital investment of about Rs. 20,000 to begin with. The centres are to undertake manufacturing and supply of *ghanis*, training of carpenters, and doing general propaganda work. The Board of Management of the Association has also allowed some latitude with regard to the process of making pulp for paper-making by the use of mechanical power under certain restrictions. The idea behind it is to make paper cheap, improve the quality, and make it available in large quantities.

In the session under report 32 students were admitted. Of these 26 were for Vinit courses and 6 for special courses in paper industry. Of the former 8 were deputed by the C. P. Government, 3 by the Bombay Government, 3 by the Sind Government, 8 by the Gwalior State, 2 (1 from Tamilnad and 1 from Bihar) were awarded A. I. V. I. A. scholarships, and 2 (one from the Punjab and one from Phaltan State) bore their own expenses. Of these 11 took oil-pressing and 15 took paper-making.

Subsequently one student from the Gwalior Government changed over from the regular to the special course, and two students in paper-making from the same Government went on leave and did not return. 21 students remained till the end of the session.

The result of the final examination was as given below: 1 was awarded a merit certificate, 4 obtained pass certificates, 1 failed, 14 qualified for industry certificates.

Two more students were admitted for the short courses in paper-making during the session. Besides training in the major industries of the group for which they were admitted, 14 students were trained in bee-keeping and soap-making out of sujji, and 7 were trained in soap-making and date palm *gud* making."

Shri Vinoba in addressing the students said that the certificates he had distributed were an indication of the preparation and training imparted for the life they had chosen to adopt. These were perilous times in which each one was going to be severely tested. We may not be fully prepared, but there were ample opportunities for service. When they

went to the villages they would find standards of life very low, but the villagers' standards of service were high. So far only saints had served them. Otherwise everyone had exploited them. The villagers were shrewd and closely examined those who went and lived with them. It was not an easy thing to obtain their certificate. They must not be looked down on by us, their servants, as illiterate or ignorant in comparison with ourselves. They have their own methods of work in agriculture as in all matters pertaining to their requirements. Very often it has been found that those who try to impart book knowledge to them fail miserably when put to practical tests. They are hard-working, as a rule. No worker, therefore, with half-baked knowledge or one who is lazy will make good in a village. Above all he has to become one with the villagers in every respect. There can be no entrance for a worker into the hearts of the people unless he learns to be attracted by their qualities and disregards their shortcomings. "I always look upon the merits of a person as the window through which one can enter his heart and the weaknesses as the walls. It is no good battering one's head against a wall when an entrance is there for us. And if we are unable to see the good in others, there is something gravely lacking in us."

The next thought Shri Vinoba conveyed to the students was that they should be above all party strife in villages. Their only 'ism' in these days of 'isms' was service. And in that whole-hearted service there must be neither desire for reward nor looking for results.

Lastly he impressed on them that they would have to serve in various ways but they must never neglect the industrial side of their work. At least half the day should be devoted to whatever craft they had taken up. They had to continue to improve their knowledge and become experts. Their minds must be fresh and alert; quick to respond to local conditions. In Maganwadi they had been provided with every facility. In villages they would have to depend on their own ingenuity. It was the little things in everyday life which would be the big things for them. Therefore their practical knowledge of the crafts must penetrate down to the minutest detail. A man who can weave beautiful patterns is no good, if he cannot set up a loom and put it right if it gets out of order.

Village soil was not easy to cultivate. The career they had chosen for themselves would need infinite patience, keen intelligence and abounding love. Shri Vinoba hoped that those who had received certificates at Maganwadi would in due course obtain what he would call the real certificates of merit from the world in whose service they had decided to live.

A portrait of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj having been unveiled, the ceremony came to an end.

Sevagram, 3-5-42

A. K.

The Indian States' Problem

By Gandhiji

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PURPOSEFUL POLITICS

The atmosphere today is surcharged with politics, but few stop to think what it is all about and to what end. Some are scared by the Japanese bombs and would fain hide themselves behind the skirts of Britannia and offer cooperation on any terms in her imperialistic war. Others there be who disdain Britain's offer but roll up their sleeves gallantly to rescue China, forgetting the clay feet on which we are standing. Being slaves ourselves we cannot help others before attaining our own freedom. Is the end of politics war? Or is it capturing a number of seats in the legislatures to let out hot air? Or is it to secure a few good posts and titles for our friends and members of our community and thus incidentally glorify ourselves?

Freedom

Some will rightly answer that our politics are calculated to secure independence and freedom. Yes, but freedom for what and from what? True freedom should be conducive to the growth of the people. As Tagore puts it freedom is

"Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments

by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come from the depth of truth,

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards

Perfection!

(To be concluded)

J. C. K.

Mysore

Reference has already been made in these columns about the Mysore Government's repressive measures against the State Congress. Now comes the news of a worse tragedy in the shape of a police charge at Bhadravati resulting in three deaths, including a child three years old, from firing by the police on an unarmed crowd. I do not wish to enter into the details. According to the Congress version the whole tragedy arose out of a peaceful labour demonstration. There is a suggestion on the Government side that the firing had to be resorted to because the crowd had attacked the police station in Bhadravati. The President of the Congress denies the charge and demands an inquiry. It will be worthless unless it is admittedly impartial. If the crowd had attacked the police station, what was the cause? If the crowd was non-violent, was the firing a mere wanton awe-inspiring process? In either case the people must learn the art of being killed, and if they are non-violent, without any reason therefor save for their love of liberty. It is a duty then to face death as cheerfully as we face imprisonment. Indeed, I do not know that such a swift ending is not more welcome than the prolonged agony that jail life sometimes becomes. As the struggle becomes wider and more earnest and more real, imprisonment is bound to be, as past experience teaches, increasingly hard to bear. Death for a brave and strong-willed man will then be a welcome relief.

On the way to Bombay, 10-5-42

M. K. G.

HARIJAN

May 17

1942

TO EVERY BRITON

(By M. K. Gandhi)

When I had just begun my public career in South Africa I wrote "An Open Letter to Every Briton in South Africa". It had its effect. I feel that I should repeat the example at this critical juncture in the history of the world. This time my appeal must be to every Briton in the world. He may be nobody in the counsels of his nation. But in the empire of non-violence every true thought counts, every true voice has its full value. *Vox populi vox dei* is not a copy-book maxim. It is an expression of the solid experience of mankind. But it has one qualification. Its truth is confined to the field of non-violence. Violence can for the moment completely frustrate a people's voice. But since I work on the field of non-violence only, every true thought expressed or unexpressed counts for me.

I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this very hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession and at least from India. That step is essential for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism and Fascism. In this I include Japan's 'ism' also. It is a good copy of the two. Acceptance of my appeal will confound all the military plans of all the Axis Powers and even of the military advisers of Great Britain.

If my appeal goes home, I am sure the cost of British interests in India and Africa would be nothing compared to the present ever-growing cost of the war to Britain. And when one puts morals in the scales, there is nothing but gain to Britain, India and the world.

Though I ask for their withdrawal from Asia and Africa, let me confine myself for the moment to India. British statesmen talk glibly of India's participation in the war. Now India was never even formally consulted on the declaration of war. Why should it be? India does not belong to Indians. It belongs to the British. It has been even called a British possession. The British practically do with it as they like. They make me—an all-war resister—pay a war tax in a variety of ways. Thus I pay two pice as war tax on every letter I post, one pice on every postcard, and two annas on every wire I send. This is the lightest side of the dismal picture. But it shows British ingenuity. If I was a student of economics, I could produce startling figures as to what India has been made to pay towards the war apart from what are mis-called voluntary contributions. No contribution made to a conqueror can be truly described as voluntary. What a conqueror the Briton makes! He is well saddled in his seat. I do not exaggerate

when I say that a whisper of his wish is promptly answered in India. Britain may, therefore, be said to be at perpetual war with India which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. How does India profit by this enforced participation in Britain's war? The bravery of Indian soldiers profits India nothing.

Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops—Indian and non-Indian. The dwellers are summarily ejected and expected to shift for themselves. They are paid a paltry vacating expense which carries them nowhere. Their occupation is gone. They have to build their cottages and search for their livelihood. These people do not vacate out of a spirit of patriotism. When this incident was referred to me a few days ago, I wrote in these columns that the dispossessed people should be asked to bear their lot with resignation. But my co-workers protested and invited me to go to the evacuees and console them myself or send someone to perform the impossible task. They were right. These poor people should never have been treated as they were. They should have been lodged suitably at the same time that they were asked to vacate.

People in East Bengal may almost be regarded as amphibious. They live partly on land and partly on the waters of the rivers. They have light canoes which enable them to go from place to place. For fear of the Japanese using the canoes the people have been called upon to surrender them. For a Bengali to part with his canoe, is almost like parting with his life. So those who take away his canoe he regards as his enemy.

Great Britain has to win the war. Need she do so at India's expense? Should she do so?

But I have something more to add to this sad chapter. The falsity that envelopes Indian life is suffocating. Almost every Indian you meet is discontented. But he will not own it publicly. The Government employees high and low are no exception. I am not giving hearsay evidence. Many British officials know this. But they have evolved the art of taking work from such elements. This all-pervading distrust and falsity make life worthless unless one resists it with one's whole soul.

You may refuse to believe all I say. Of course I shall be contradicted. I shall survive the contradictions.

I have stated what I believe to be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

My people may or may not approve of this loud thinking. I have consulted nobody. This appeal is being written during my silence day. I am just now concerned with Britain's action. When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests and tears notwithstanding, slavery was abolished in law. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North; and so though the Negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the outcaste of high society. I am

asking for something much higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us.

Bombay, 11-5-42

AN APPEAL

Gandhiji is visiting Bombay under somewhat unusual circumstances. The public are well aware of his preoccupations, especially during these days of stress and strain. Besides, he is none too strong these days. And it is well-known that he is loath to leave Sevagram. When Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were in Wardha some days ago, they discussed with him his appeal for the Deenbandhu Memorial Fund. They said that, if he could spare a few days and come to Bombay, they might be able to help in collecting the amount. They could not bear the thought of Gandhiji making a tour for collecting Rs. 5 lakhs for Santiniketan. His time and energy were, they knew, premortgaged for other purposes, and it would be a tragedy if he had to make a tour for the mere purpose of this collection.

This reminds me of a similar occasion when Gandhiji decided that Gurudev should not be permitted to tour the country giving performances of his plays for the sake of his institutions, when he had already passed 70. It was in the month of March 1936 when we happened to be in Delhi, and Gurudev too was there with the inmates of his Ashram to give a performance of his famous musical play *Chandalika*. He looked aged and worn, and his appearing on the stage in order to beg for his institutions was unbearable to Gandhiji. He spoke to Ghanshyamdasji who agreed that the Poet should be relieved of the burden. The following letter with a cheque was immediately addressed to the Poet:

Delhi, Harijan Colony,
27th March, 1936

Respected Sir,

Please find the enclosed draft for Rs. 60,000 which we believe is the deficit on the expenses on Santiniketan, to cover which you have been exhibiting your art from place to place. When we heard this, we felt humiliated. We believe that at your advanced age and in your weak state of health you ought not to have to undertake these arduous tours. We must confess that we know very little of the institution—except the name. But we have not been unaware of your great fame as the Poet of the age. You are not only the greatest Poet of India, you are the Poet of humanity. Your poems remind one of the hymns of the ancient rishis. You have by your unrivalled gifts raised the status of our country. And we feel that those whom God has blessed with means should relieve you of the burden of finding the funds required for the conduct of the institution. Our contribution is a humble effort in that direction. For reasons, which need not be stated, we prefer to remain anonymous. We hope that you will now cancel all the engagements taken for raising the sum above mentioned.

Praying for your long life to continue the service you are rendering to our country,

We remain,
Your humble countrymen

The Poet, to whom I took the letter, was immensely happy. He cancelled his tour and wrote to Gandhiji a letter of which the single sentence still reverberates in my memory: "Words fail me to express my gratefulness for your having come to my help and reminded me of my Swadharma from which I had fallen."

Well, now that Gurudev is no more and C. F. Andrews too is no more, our debt to both of them is all the greater and more imperative. The very fact that Gandhiji should have put aside his preoccupations for the purpose should indicate the importance and peremptory nature of his mission. I appeal to the generous-minded public of Bombay to fill Gandhiji's begging bowl within the next week that he has set apart for the purpose. These are days when nothing seems to be secure—certainly not money and property—but duty done and money given to a noble purpose were never insecure, and I appeal to everyone to respond to this call of duty.

M. D.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

If 'Harijan' Is Prohibited

Q. You are going strong. You should know that, if the people follow you, it must hinder the present war effort. The Government cannot allow it. If they do, you will admit that only the British Government can show such generosity. And what will you do if they suppress it?

A. No Government can afford to be generous. A man is generous when he does something at his own expense. Governments can do nothing at their own expense. But they always succeed in making people believe that they are generous even when they are barely or less than just. Justice is like a debt which has to be discharged. Therefore, if the Government permit *Harijan* to continue its even course, they will do so because it is proper from their point of view. They will not hesitate to suppress it when they think it is improper not to do so. I stated at the time of the resumption of publication that it was no part of my plan to persist in publication in spite of prohibition. I will, therefore, again suspend publication when the Government desire it. If they do, it will be a loss to the public. For, apart from the three weeklies, its articles appear by special permission in Urdu *Hindustan*—Lucknow, Urdu *Harijan*—Lahore, Marathi *Harijan*—Wardha. It is also published in Telugu and Ooria. Articles are sent to them in advance. Numerous other newspapers copy or translate articles from it week by week. There is no generosity in tolerating the publication of such a popular weekly. And my writings will not hinder war effort, if it is voluntary. If they influence the people, surely there is something wrong somewhere. It is not *Harijan* that should be stopped, but the wrong it exposes should be undone. I look upon

my writings as a solid contribution to war effort, for he serves a cause best who exposes its weaknesses or those of its representatives.

You ask what I would do if they suppress *Harijan*. I must frankly confess, I do not know. I have cultivated the habit of not anticipating evil. I am able to know the remedy instinctively when I am face to face with an evil. That is how a God-fearing man acts. The fear of God disposes of every other fear. But I can give you this assurance that suppression of *Harijan* can never mean suppression of me.

Bombay, 11-5-42

Intellectual Conviction

Q. Intellectually I am convinced that non-violence is the only solution of quarrels between man and man. But by nature I cannot but react violently to acts of hostility to my country or myself. So I am unable to be content with non-violent resistance only against the Japanese. I feel that, in addition to whatever I may be able to do by way of non-violent resistance, I should also do my utmost to help the war effort against them. They have no right to invade my country even though it is in British hands and not ours. But when I think of helping the war effort, my intellectual conviction of non-violence does not allow me to do so with peace of mind.

A. Your difficulty is a common difficulty. But if you have real intellectual conviction, it will overcome your nature which is nothing but habit. Your conviction should tell you that non-violence is a force infinitely superior to violence. Hence you do not need to rely upon violent assistance. Moreover you are labouring under a fallacy. Why do you say that the Japanese have no right to invade your country although it is in foreigners' hands? In the first place, the country is not yours while it is in others' hands. You cannot do what you like with it. The foreigners can and do. Secondly, if the Japanese have enmity against your master, they have every right to attack what your master possesses. We are not examining here the correctness of Japan's conduct in going to war against Great Britain. I am simply pointing out what seems to me to be your mental confusion. The proper course for you is to ask the wrongful possessor to vacate your country. When he has done it you will have the choice between violence and non-violence against the Japanese attack, if it comes. But the thing is not so simple as I have put it. Your difficulty is real. You feel that you cannot defend your country. You have lost it. The English can, if you help them. If the English vacate the country, the Japanese are much more likely to attack undefended India if only for strategic purposes, and you will be utterly helpless against the invading host. Therefore, seeing that the English are in India and they can defend, why not make common cause with them and answer the impending attack? After victory, have they not said, they would go away if they are not wanted? This, I expect, is your argument. In my opinion it is only plausible. The British do not want your help on your terms, as

witness the failure of the Cripps mission. They want it on their terms. If, therefore, victory is achieved, the British hold will be ever so much stronger than before. If they will not trust you now, there is no warrant for supposing that they will after victory. They will then ask you with greater force than now to produce the unity which cannot be produced whilst they are here. You get out of all this tangle, if you adopt my method. If you have intellectual conviction, you can approach the problem with the utmost confidence. You are friend to all. You say to the British with the greatest goodwill that, if they leave India, she will take care of herself and will probably escape Japanese attention, and if she cannot, she will answer it with non-violence. Then by that simple act of justice they gain your eternal friendship. It may stand them in good stead even during the present war. For India will then of her own free will help China, Russia and others. If India sets her own house in order, as I have no doubt it will, India can work wonders.

Bombay, 10-5-42

Congress and League

Q. Maulana Saheb has made what I consider a very wise and patriotic suggestion that the Congress Working Committee will nominate five representatives to meet the representatives of the Muslim League when the latter so desire to do. I trust it will commend itself to you. If it does, I should like you publicly to support it. It will go a long way to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together.

A. I have no hesitation in endorsing Maulana Saheb's suggestion. No one would be more glad than I if, with or without my endorsement, the two can come together. I have always felt that there is something radically wrong with both that the most obvious thing, viz. the coming together of the wise men of both with a will to find a solution of the deadlock, has not happened.

Ingenious Method

Q. Your advocacy of the learning of Urdu as part of the national language which you have called Hindustani is all very well. What do you say to the propaganda that is being carried on in the Nizam's Dominions on behalf of Urdu? Here is the first question in a Telugu examination paper:

"If for the purposes of Federation a common language for India is indispensable and the case of Hindustani is strong enough, then it seems to me that as far as this University is concerned it should immediately make Urdu its medium of instruction especially when it happens to be the mother-tongue of this province. Those who would wait till it grows richer are sadly mistaken and argue in a circle. It will remain poor as long as the Universities make no use of it in teaching all branches of knowledge."

Remember that Telugu and not Urdu is the mother-tongue of the majority of the people in this part of the country. What do you say to the ingenious method adopted of carrying on pro-Urdu propaganda through examination papers?

A. I admit that the method adopted is both ingenious and strange. An examination paper is hardly a vehicle for propaganda on a question on

which sharp division of opinion prevails. I agree that Urdu is not the mother-tongue of the people of H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions. What proportion of the population knows Telugu I do not know. My notion of an all-India speech does not involve the displacement of the great provincial languages, but its knowledge is meant to be an addition to that of the provincial speech. Nor do I expect that the millions will ever learn the all-India speech. It will be learnt by the politically-minded and those who have interprovincial connections. Indeed a correspondent suggests that in the place of an all-India speech I should advocate the learning of the languages of neighbouring provinces. Thus he says: "It is far more useful for the Assamese to know Bengali than Hindi or Urdu and now according to you Hindi and Urdu." If we had not the intolerable burden of learning English not merely as a second language but as a language through which all higher instruction is imparted to us, we should find it child's play to learn our neighbours' speech and certainly learn the all-India speech for all-India contacts. In my opinion a boy or girl lacks culture and accomplishment, if he or she does not know half a dozen languages of India. It is a sure sign of brain fag on the part of English-knowing Indians when they tremble at the very thought of learning a language other than English, not excluding even their mother's speech. For the majority of objectors are English-knowing Indians. I have found no difficulty about the Ashram inmates learning Urdu in addition to Hindi. And I know that in South Africa the Tamil labourers could speak Telugu and *vice versa*, and they had a working knowledge of Hindi. No one had told them that they should learn Hindi. Somehow or other they knew intuitively that they should know Hindi. Of course they were no scholars, but for mutual intercourse they picked up what was necessary. They picked up also the speech of their neighbours, the Zulus. They could not carry on their business, if they did not. Thus most Indians knew besides their mother-tongues two more Indian languages, Zulu, and a smattering of even English. Needless to say many of them wrote no language, and most could write only ungrammatically their own mother-tongues. The moral of this is obvious.

If you dispense with the script, you pick up your neighbour's language without effort and without difficulty, and if you are fresh and the brain is not wearied, you can learn as many scripts as you wish without any difficulty. The study is any day interesting and stimulating. The study of languages is an art and valuable at that.

On the way to Bombay, 10-5-42

By R. B. Gregg

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IN RESURGENT CHINA

In the constructive effort of Nationalist China there are several features which should be of special interest to us. One of the most important items in that programme has been the rehabilitation of village life. In the retreat before the advancing Japanese hordes the Chinese had to abandon cities and fall back on villages. People had to depend on rural products and adapt themselves to rural surroundings. Madame Chiang Kai-shek wrote:

"Continuance of national resistance against aggression entails greater need for economy and self-sacrifice on the part of the whole country. Even before the hostilities began New Life laid emphasis upon rational living. Since the war began, this principle has become not only desirable but necessary. The need of it inspired New Life to celebrate its fifth anniversary last year (i. e. in 1939) by sponsoring exhibitions in all the main cities to show the people the most practical ways of utilising local products. Houses furnished with only native goods were exhibited. Bamboos were used as water pipes, and bed mattresses were made of palm bark—far cooler and almost as resilient as the foreign 'Beauty Rest' mattresses, and costing a fraction of the price of the latter. In every phase of life people were encouraged to take advantage of the material at hand." (*China Shall Rise Again*)

A "Grow More Food, Save More Food" movement was set afoot. It caught the farmers' imagination. The cultivation of potato, soya beans and Indian corn was recommended because they yield most food per unit. Non-food crops were to be reduced. People were asked to wear their old cotton clothes longer than they would in times of peace. New lands in the interior were put under cultivation and refugees were put on the work. The programme provided work to two farm hands where only one was employed before. The practice of growing wheat in rice fields in winter, when they used to be allowed to lie fallow, was adopted and increased. Agriculturists were encouraged to adopt better methods of cultivation, to strengthen the dykes against rivers, and to dig more irrigation ditches as a safeguard against draught. Irrigation and drainage projects were pushed forward, and forest lands began to be cleared.

In order to economise in the consumption of food, "people were asked to eat unpolished rice and coarse flour, as well as sweet potatoes, beans, squash, and other vegetables. Another way of conserving food is to abstain from drinking wine. Chinese wine is made of rice which today is more urgently needed as food." (Chen Ta-jen) The Government issued an order prohibiting the milling and sale of high-grade polished rice, and organised a campaign for promoting and popularising the use of miscellaneous food crops as substitutes for rice.

With a view to providing people "driven away from or bombed out of their homes" with nourishing food, the New Life movement started a network of cafeterias where cheap, clean and nutritive food could be had and where the customers served themselves. A new article of food, nourishing

though cheap — 'vitacake' — has been invented. "It provides something portable and nutritive to eat during the long hours in dugouts. It is made of half wheat, and half soya-bean milk residue. Formerly the latter was used only for the feeding of chickens."

The revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving is another important item. Though the Chinese performed the amazing feat of bodily removing the machinery of about 150 large factories (weighing over 15,000 tons) by small boats to Chungking and up the 300 steps of the city by coolies, the products of the textile mills could not suffice for the needs of the army and the people, and cloth became scarce. As Edgar Mowrer says in his book on China, "Shantung, the great silk-producing province, practically all of the cotton-growing and textile-manufacturing regions, were overrun by the enemy. Therefore, Madame Chaing Kai-shek obtained 70,000 hand looms for refugee women on which to weave cotton stuffs of the simplest kind . . . She summoned a great meeting of important women from all over China at Kuling, and extended their activity to the organisation of weaving and the stimulation of home industries." Describing the training given to students in hand-weaving and hand-spinning, she says:

"A three months' course of training in spinning and weaving is the order of the day. During the first month the pupils get their board and lodging free. During the second month they are able to bear half of the expenses. At the end of the third month they can support other members of their families. When they are graduated they return home, and six months later they generally have made enough money not only to support themselves and their families, but to pay for the wheel, or the looms, bought on the cooperative plan."

Experimental centres have been started in various places, and in one district which formerly did not grow cotton, over 1,500 cooperative members are engaged in producing cotton. The result is that in a place where people before were clothed in tatters for want of cloth, "now, two years later, the place presents an entirely different atmosphere and appearance. The people are all cleanly and well dressed; the old stores reopened; new stores, carrying a line of goods bordering on luxuries, have opened, and their stocks alone show how the standard of living has gone up."

Nor have other industries been neglected. The Madame goes on to say:

"The Production Department has also trained several hundred women as staff workers in hand-made embroidery. These women are now being sent out to various districts to train the local women to produce embroidered articles mostly from ramie (sometimes called grass linen, or China grass) which finds a steady market both at home and abroad Wherever there are teams of our workers we have some form of production going on. In each district the type of work is decided by the raw materials produced. In one district where

the clay makes good porcelain, we are specializing in the making of artistic dishes and bowls at low cost."

While Japan could destroy and has destroyed large mills and factories by bombing, no amount of bombing could possibly wipe out village industries, and even if destroyed, they could be started again without much difficulty.

Emphasising the paramount necessity of starting village industries and of restricting the development of large scale industries to the minimum unavoidable she said, as far back as in 1938:

"I should like to see village industry carefully developed wherever it is possible for raw materials to be produced and worked up to supply the daily needs of the people. There will have to be mechanical aid in cases; but I hope that machinery never will be brought to China to save labour as its first principle and requirement. Machinery should be used to make necessities which hands cannot make, but there it should stop. Nor should cut-throat competition in manufacture be permitted. In that the workmen suffer. . . . If we emerge safely from the calamities of this war, there is one brake that will be put upon us that should have a restraining influence upon development of too many large industries. That is the brake of exhausted finance. It will not be easy to plunge into great schemes of factory development, and that, to my mind, is a good thing. There is so much to be done by hand, so many hands to do it, that wisdom dictates energetic arrangement of opportunities and possibilities for manual work just as quickly as circumstances will allow." (*China in Peace and War*)

If China could put forth this tremendous mass effort at nation-building in spite of her preoccupation with a devastating war, it should be no less possible for us, provided we can summon up enough of will and resourcefulness. The constructive programme has long been before us. And now that adversity has thrown city-bred classes and village-bred masses together, it is up to the former to utilise the opportunity for rekindling the life of the villages which, though long neglected and derided, are proving our only resort of safety and refuge.

C. S.

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Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad

Subscription Rates — INLAND: One year, Rs. 5, six months, Rs. 3. FOREIGN: One year, Rs. 7 or 12 sh. or \$, 8

HARIJAN

Editor: MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, No. 17]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 10, 1942

[FIVE PICE

Notes

States and Their People

I have suggested in these columns that the people of the States should remain calm and so far as possible not precipitate a clash, as events are shaping themselves in spite of us. But there is a limit to every such proposal. In Travancore, Mysore and Jodhpur things seem to have gone beyond endurance.

I have already referred to Travancore where two of its best workers have been cast into prison for the simple reason that they are too public-spirited to submit to autocracy.

The same thing is happening in Mysore though in a slightly different manner. The cause is identical. The Mysore State Congress must not be tolerated. I know how the members have tried to placate authority. They have refrained from raising large issues save that they must keep the goal of liberty before the Mysoreans.

And now comes serious news from Jodhpur. There, as in the other States, the local Parishad people have tried to work in cooperation with authority. They have raised no awkward questions. But the Rajputana States, like many others, have many jagirdars who are co-sharers with the Princes and derive authority from them. They may be termed States within States. These have no law governing them. The British Power has no direct control over them. The Princes are ever afraid of them. They dare not interfere with the exercise of the jagirdars' authority over the people within their jurisdiction. The result is that the people within these jagirdaris are the worst off in the Indian hierarchy. There was a clash, as far as my information goes, between the people and one of the jagirdars. This incident promises to lead to a major issue. Associations favoured by authority as in British India are, it is said, being set up against the popular Parishad. If a deliberate attempt is being made to suppress the local associations, the latter must accept the challenge and risk the worst in the full faith that liberty and truth cannot be suppressed for ever. But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless.

Opium Addicts

A correspondent writes as follows:

"I do not know whether you are aware that in Rajputana (Marwar) the inhabitants are terrible opium addicts. A wedding or death or any ceremonial occasion necessitates the offering of opium to the visitors. It

may even mean the pawning of goods or mortgaging of property, but the opium has to be offered. It is quite an ordinary matter for a person to take 1½ or 2 tolas of opium per day and sometimes even more. I know of some who can swallow as much as five. When my father died I went home. A Brahman friend came to condole. The first thing was to offer him opium which is generally kept in a special box. There were three tolas in it. The Brahman said he would help himself. To my astonishment he emptied the entire contents on the palm of his hand and swallowed them. Having done so he said he was not satisfied. When I asked him how much was sufficient he replied 'four tolas'! And of course, if opium-eaters do not get their dope at the proper time, they are no better than useless lumps of flesh.' This drug habit is eating as a canker into our society."

Deenbandhu Andrews and Pearson laboured on behalf of these addicts. We have not cared for them half as much as we have for the drink addicts. The effects of opium are not so patent as of drink so far as society is concerned. But both the vices have nothing between them to choose. Slaves of opium have their reason atrophied. They become living automata, having no interest in anything but their opium. How to deal with them is a tremendous question. Not until we have an unlimited band of workers, well-trained and seasoned, will it be possible to produce an effect on these helpless members of society. The medical profession can render valuable assistance by carrying on researches and discovering remedies for dealing with this social disease.

Sevagram, 4-5-42

M. K. G.

Interesting Figures

The following figures re: the work of the Spinners' Association in the famine-stricken areas of Hissar are illuminating. They should banish all foolish doubt regarding the efficacy of spinning and weaving centres for relieving distress as also prove the selfless nature of the work done by the Association.

1. The number of centres in January, February and March were 8, 12, and 13 respectively.

2. The number of spinners in January, February and March were 2,042, 4,588 and 5,914, and the wages paid to them were Rs. 3,213, Rs. 6,913 and Rs. 12,919 respectively.

3. The number of carders were 148, 223 and 274. Their wages were Rs. 855, Rs. 1,657, and Rs. 2,593.

4. The number of weavers were 308, 360, and 563, and the wages earned by them Rs. 354, Rs. 723 and Rs. 889.

Total number of artisans 6,771.

Total amount of wages paid Rs. 29,628.

Total amount of yarn purchased Rs. 38,042 worth.

Because there are very few weavers in Hissar District the amount of khadi actually produced there is only Rs. 6,797 worth. The yarn will of course be woven elsewhere.

It is interesting to note that Rs. 1,818 only were spent on salaries of workers.

Sevagram, 3-5-42

A. K.

TRAINING IN COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

Powerful forces are driving us to realise the importance of resuscitating the village and its economic life. In the first place, our country is a land of villages; so if we would work for the country, we must work for the villages. In the second place, young men educated in schools and colleges are more and more left unemployed. Literacy education has left them helpless in the face of the economic struggle for existence. Even in their own interests such men have to turn to village and cottage industries to earn their living. In the third place, the present uncertain conditions prevailing in towns and cities prevent young men from going back to colleges, which may not even reopen. In the fourth place, with war at our door, and with the consequent difficulty of transport, it has become essential for people wherever they are to produce all that they require for themselves. With the scanty capital available to us, the only possibility is for each family to take to some home industry or other and thus become self-dependent. And when our people have become self-dependent we shall have won real national independence.

With the object of preparing young men and women for village work and of teaching them a village industry, the All India Village Industries Association has been conducting courses in its Gram Sevak Vidyalaya at Wardha.

1. The next session for the Gram Udyog Vinit (Elementary General Course) of the Gram Sevak Vidyalaya, A. I. V. I. A. Wardha, is from the 1st July 1942 to the 30th April 1943.

2. Applicants for admission should not be under 22 years of age, should be healthy and fit for hard manual work, and should in education have reached at least the matriculation standard.

3. Students will have the option of taking one of the following two groups: 1. Oil-pressing, 2. Paper-making. Instructions in Bee-keeping and Soap-making will be given to both groups of students.

4. Expenses including fees, board, lodging and incidentals will amount to about Rs. 20 a month.

5. Students will reside in the Vidyalaya Hostel and take their meals there. The food served will be vegetarian.

6. No one should come before receiving a letter of admission from the Superintendent of the Vidyalaya.

Detailed prospectus and application forms may be had from the Superintendent, Gram Sevak Vidyalaya, Maganwadi, Wardha, C. P., to whom all applications in the prescribed form must reach before the 31st May, 1942.

A RURAL ANTHOLOGY

I have been turning over the pages of *The Open Air*, an anthology of English country life by Adrian Bell (Faber and Faber), and I was delighted but not surprised to find that rural culture in Britain is or rather was very much the same as in India, for all mankind is one in essence.

Handicrafts played as important a part in the English countryside as in an Indian village. As Mr. Bell says in his introduction, "before the tension of competitive money-making, of the need to support a certain social standard of amenity, paralysed the individual life; before water and heat became commodities, and the machine departmentalised and insulated vocations one from another; before the grooves of specialisation became so deep that the mind was blinkered and ran in one track, the knowledge of a craft gave a man intuitively a power of judgment over all other branches of life. Because the basic arts of life were homogeneous. Broadcasting, swift communications, give an illusory appearance of unification; they mask the real dispersion of mind that is taking place, the insulation of man from man. The different social temperatures in a modern railway carriage and in a stagecoach might be compared. Even the old horse-bus driver was a conversational person, to sit beside whom was something of a privilege; the driver of the motor vehicle is necessarily insulated." (The italics are mine.)

Here is an idyllic picture of a Scottish family in the middle of the eighteenth century from the pen of William and Robert Chambers taken from their *Memoir*:

"The farm of Tedderfield, situated on the hillface above Neidpath Castle, the property of the Earl of March, was occupied at a rent of eighteen pounds, by an honest man named David Grieve This family (of fourteen children) afforded an example of the virtuous frugal life of the rural people of Scotland previous to that extension of industry which brought wealth and many comforts into our country. The breakfast was oatmeal porridge Strange as it may seem, a people of many fine qualities were reared in this plain style, and people of bone and muscle, mentally as well as physically. There was not a particle of luxury in that Sabine life; hardly a single article of the kinds sold in shops was used. *The food was all obtained from the farms, and the clothing was wholly of homespun.* I cannot be under any mistake about it, for I have often heard the household and its ways described by my maternal grandmother, who was David Grieve's eldest daughter. Even the education of the children was conducted at home, *the mother giving them lessons while seated at her spinning-wheel.*

Janet, the eldest girl, was wedded at eighteen by a middle-aged farmer who rented a farm called. The marriage took place in 1768. On the day preceding the event, Janet's 'providing' was despatched in a cart from Tedderfield to what was to be her new home; *the load of various articles being conspicuously surmounted by a spinning-wheel decorated with ribbons of different colours* Although the (Newby) homestead consisted of only a cottage,

containing a kitchen and parlour, with the appendages of a barn etc., it gave shelter every night to groups of vagrant people.

My grandmother and her maids were generally up at an early hour in the morning to attend to the ewes, and their time for going to rest must have consequently been an early one. There was always however a period called 'between gloaming and supper-time', during which *another industry was practised*. Then it was that the *wheels were brought out for the spinning of the yarn* which was to constitute the clothing of the family. And I often think that it must have been a pleasing sight in that humble hall — the handsome young mistress amidst her troop of maidens, all busy with foot and finger, while the shepherds and their master would be telling stories or cracking jokes for the general entertainment, or some one with a good voice would be singing the songs of Ramsay and Hamilton." (The italics are mine.)

It is a curious but happy coincidence that the spinning-wheel, the only article that Gandhiji 'provides' for the girls whom he gives away in marriage, should also have been provided for Janet Grieve, and the handsome young mistress amidst her troop of maidens, all busy with foot and finger in the humble hall, remind us of fair Nausicaa's description of her mother Areta in the Odyssey:

"My mother; she beside a column sits

In the hearth's blaze, twirling her fleecy threads
Tinged with sea-purple, bright, magnificent!

With all her maidens orderly behind."

(To be continued) V. G. D.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

(By Shriman Narayan Agrawal)

Now that the problem of the medium of instruction has evoked fresh interest in the country, it will be useful to know the present position in the various Indian Universities. I wrote to the Registrars of the different Universities in this connection, and a gist of their replies is given below:

In the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Punjab, Agra, Patna, Dacca, Mysore and Andhra, the medium of instruction after the Matriculation stage is English. No immediate change is contemplated.

In the Muslim University, Aligarh, the medium of instruction in High School classes is Urdu, and the question of introducing Urdu as the medium of instruction in the Intermediate classes is under consideration.

The Registrar of the Allahabad University writes that "the University is fully alive to the necessity of making Hindi or Urdu the medium of instruction, and it will surely take steps as occasion arises."

In the Benares Hindu University "the examinees up to the Intermediate examination are permitted to answer their optional papers in Hindi. Further there is no restriction imposed on teachers and professors to teach their classes in English only. In case they so desire, they can teach in Hindi."

The Academic Council of the Lucknow University has recommended that the medium of instruction and examination should be Hindustani. Final decision has yet to be taken by the Executive Council. The

following is the detailed recommendation regarding the language and the script:

"(a) The language used for instruction and examination should be Hindustani, which signifies the language in our everyday use, supplemented when necessary by words drawn from Sanskrit, Persian, English and other languages. In special cases the Executive Council may exempt individual teachers and paper-setters from the application of this rule.

(b) The script used for all scientific work written or printed, including question papers and answers, should be Roman, supplemented by new letters or signs whenever necessary.

(c) The language of books should be left to the discretion of the authors."

It is a pity that the Lucknow University is thinking of introducing the Roman script. It is hoped that wiser counsels will prevail and in place of the Roman script both 'Devnagri' and 'Persian' scripts will be introduced.

The Nagpur University Court has accepted the principle of my resolution regarding the gradual introduction of the mother-tongue medium. The details have yet to be worked out by the Academic and Executive Councils.

The Registrar of the Travancore University writes thus:

"This University fully appreciates the need for reform in this direction, but practical difficulties, such as the lack of suitable text-books of the right standard in the various subjects, the problem of the migration of students to and from this University etc. have stood in the way of any scheme of an extensive reform being adopted. This University has, however, organised a Department of Publications, which is engaged in the preparation of glossaries of scientific and technical terms in Malayalam, which will remove the chief obstacle in the way of the production of scientific books. It is hoped that the activities of the Department will pave the way for the production of suitable text-books and thus ultimately make University teaching possible in Malayalam. It has also to be borne in mind in this connection that, unless a well-planned and uniform policy is adopted in this matter by all the Indian Universities, reform is difficult if not impracticable. This University will always be prepared to consider and to fall in line with any well-considered scheme in this respect which may be sponsored by a competent body."

The Registrar is right in pointing out the desirability of concerted action. I expect that the Inter-University Board will tackle the problem in all seriousness at an early date.

In the Annamalai University "instruction through the medium of an Indian language has not yet been attempted. But, as decided by the authorities, arrangements are being made to get ready suitable text-books in Tamil of the Intermediate standard on the various optional subjects of study for the Intermediate course. So far text-books in Logic, Economics, Physics, Chemistry have been published and text-books in other subjects — Mathematics, Botany, Zoology, History will be published shortly. As soon as text-books are got ready, the question of teaching them in the language will be considered."

HARIJAN

May 10

1942

ONE THING NEEDFUL

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"To those of us who love India and Indians and have tried to serve their people faithfully, the fact that in our hour of distress the hatred against us is growing is a matter of infinite sorrow. I admit we have not played and are still not playing fair by India; but can two wrongs make a right? When even the 'enemy' is in dire distress should he not be given some quarter? In asking us to withdraw are you not inviting your own people to bend the knee to Japan, knowing full well that you have not the non-violent strength as a country to resist any foreign aggression or domination? If you had had it, we could never have kept our hold on you. Will you not forgive past sins and rely on the goodwill of the new generation of Englishmen and women who can no longer think in terms of empire? Barring you, among the Congress leaders, is there anyone who believes whole-heartedly in non-violence? Yours is the only logical position, and you alone are a real friend of Britain."

This is an epitome of a pathetic English letter. I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not been to their great virtues.

I do not deny the existence of hatred among the people at large, nor its increase with the march of events. But I claim that my national prescription has kept it under subjection and even sterilised it to an extent.

I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest. To take the extreme case, a British victory over the Japanese will not mean a victory for India. But that is not a near event. Meanwhile the introduction of foreign soldiers, the admitted inequalities of treatment of Indian and European evacuees, and the manifestly overbearing behaviour of the troops are adding to the distrust of British intentions and declarations. I feel that they cannot all of a sudden change their traditional nature. Racial superiority is treated not as a vice but a virtue. This is true not only in India; it is equally true in Africa it

is true in Burma and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed the remedy—complete and immediate 'orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of Imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of Imperialism.

British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner suggested by the writer. It is ill-equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it. And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so India cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it. Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mighty nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realisation of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-cooperation will then have full sway.

Sevagram, 4-5-42

NEGATION OF DEMOCRACY

An American reader of *Harijan* writes :

"For many years my husband and I have been enthusiastic readers of *Harijan*. We have looked upon it as an indispensable aid to the understanding of essential Indian thought and leadership. And because it has meant so much to us personally, we have tried to encourage others to read it—especially those who come from the West.

On the front page of the recent issue of *Harijan* for March 22nd there appears another article continuing the theme of British and American Nazism. I believe firmly that in justice to truth and the ideal of human brotherhood all examples of race discrimination or disrespect for personality in any form should be ferreted out and corrected. As one looks over the face of the globe today one is sobered by the fact that no race, country or group is free from this disgraceful behaviour. This fact alone should be enough to foster deep, penitent humility on the part of all, and at the same time encourage cooperative endeavour among men and

women of all groups and nationalities who are sensitive to the needs of this problem. Thus you render America a service when you call her attention to such forms of discrimination and challenge her in her supposed stand for democracy. It is extremely helpful for an individual, class, country or civilization to see itself as others see it. And no brief can be held for America's share in class distinction, whether it be toward the Negro, her own semi-literate poor, or people of other nationalities.

But I should also like to comment on a few statements or quotations from your articles which appear misleading. Going back to an earlier issue (Feb. 15, '42) I was surprised to find the statement that Dr. Carver, the great American scientist, 'remains in America the shunned Negro that he was nearly eighty years ago.' Judging from personal experience this is a misleading statement. *The Readers' Digest* has carried a number of excellent articles on the life and spirit of Dr. Carver, as well as accounts of his unique discoveries. During my stay in U. S. A., in '38-'39, I noted innumerable occasions on which he was quoted, admired, in New York and other parts of the East which singled him out as the important speaker on many special occasions. It is also interesting to recall that at federated meetings, Columbia University lectures, the Riverside pulpit and elsewhere he was the scientist most frequently referred to either because of his scientific achievements, or because of his spiritual leadership, or both. Neither Einstein nor the Compton brothers who were so frequently before the public in the early thirties received such ovations.

In another article you bring to the attention of the reader the painfully neglected truth that 'there is no doubt that there cannot be a peace to which Indians or the Negroes can give assent unless it has for its foundation democracy broad-based on the freedom and equal citizenship rights of all — white, black, yellow, etc.' But without in the least detracting from this matter of major concern may a few brief comments be made in regard to points (1) and (5).

To one who has attended a variety of schools and universities in the U. S. A., it is difficult to see how the statement that 'Negro students are not admitted to common educational institutions nor are separate equal facilities provided for them' is not misleading. At Ohio State, Union Seminary, Columbia University, and Northfield Seminary, to name just a few, Negro students have been admitted, and have achieved high positions of leadership.

The quotation under point (5) that 'Niggers must be made to know their place, with violence and terror if necessary,' America certainly needs to face and rectify. The question which interests me here is how we can reveal national or individual shortcomings in such a way as to arouse the least amount of self-defence and the most determined action for change. Knowing the human weakness of jumping to the defensive, which besets us all to a greater or less degree, I am afraid many Americans would miss the challenge behind point (5) and say here India—and perhaps the West have themselves to thank for this—is giving general significance to an attitude which large

areas of American opinion itself condemns, and overlooking the growing endeavours that are being put forth to give the Negro his rightful inheritance.

My husband joins me in sending you our sincere greetings. India is much on our hearts, especially during these fateful days that lie just ahead."

I gladly publish the American friend's letter in full. As regards the two inaccuracies she has pointed out, I am thankful for the facts, but let me make one or two things clear. It is not that conditions have not improved or are not improving, but it is still true that even a person of the spiritual status of Dr. Carver does not enjoy the same citizen rights as a White American. That he is respected by some of the enlightened Americans is not to be disputed. To take an example of the unfortunate condition in India, Dr. Ambedkar is respected by most of the educated people in India, but even he suffers from the same disabilities as other Harijans, so far as temples, residential quarters etc. are concerned. The colour bar should be an offence in democratic America, even as untouchability should be an offence in a free and democratic India.

As regards students, segregation is not so bad in Northern States, but my remark is absolutely true in respect of most of the Southern States. "After 1938 U. S. Supreme Court Decision ordering the State of Missouri to admit Lloyd L. Gaines to the University of Missouri Law School or provide equal facilities within the State, a separate Law School for Negroes authorised by the Taylor Bill has been organised at St. Louis as an extension of the State-supported Lincoln University." (*Enc. Britt. Book of the Year 1940*) Even the Supreme Court decision could not secure to the Negroes entry into the common law-school.

Regarding the last remark, let me say that I had only summarised in two or three sentences a series of very unpleasant incidents. If the general attitude were sound and these incidents only exceptional, I should have nothing to say. *The New Republic* devotes a long article to the question, and points out that resentment had reached a white heat among Negro circles because of incidents of this character. I had deliberately refrained from mentioning another factor which is equally galling. As a rule Negroes are debarred from jobs in the defence industries. "Of 1400 boys," wrote *Time* (Nov. 41), "recently trained by the City's schools for defence work only 70 got jobs." And *The New York Times* wrote: "If the nation is engaged on the side of democracy, it must leave the doors of opportunity open to all, regardless of race." Again: "Discrimination against opportunities for the Negro to learn and practise skilled trades is not confined to the South, nor is it practised only by the employers . . . This is a situation in which men and women are being held back not by lack of ability and trustworthiness but because of race . . . The issue is more than factional. It involves simple justice and loyalty to the democratic ideal."

It is this loyalty to the democratic ideal that is woefully lacking both in U. S. A. and the British

Empire. Apart from the numerous instances that even the conduct of the war has disclosed, the Empire itself is a negation of democracy. These instances reduce the much-vaunted 'Atlantic Charter' to a mockery.

Sevagram, 5-5-42

M. D.

FOR "COMMON FOLK"

Two letters from readers of *Harijan* belonging to different parts of India, and describing themselves as common folk are worthy of notice for the benefit of those who come under that category — indeed, the vast mass of people do not belong to any other category. One is from an ordinary clerk in a small town in the District of 24 Parganas in Bengal. The sentiments in the letter are entirely his, the language is mine:

"I am a regular spinner. I have just finished another year of my spinning *yajna*. In spite of various difficulties and preoccupations this year, I spun 65 hanks (640 yards each) of 16 to 18 counts from cotton collected from the tree-cotton in my own yard and carded by my children. This was enough to give me 3 dhotis, and 5 yards of khadi for two shirts for my own use for a year. I am doing nothing extraordinary, but I should like to give you some details in order to show that the excuse of want of time is after all a lame one. After finishing the morning functions at 5 in the morning I start spinning which I do for a couple of hours. I believe with Shri Vinoba that 'spinning is a daily spiritual sacrifice with a view to identifying oneself with the poor and adding something to national wealth. It disciplines us and helps us to make our lives orderly.' I have to attend office from 11 a. m. to 7 p. m., and naturally I have to attend to my daily duties as householder — making purchases, domestic duties and so on. During the last year I have had to cook for myself and my children for several months. This year I have started the *yajna* with a couple of hours' spinning as I have said, and it begins with the first day of the National Week. Many of my friends, whom I ask to devote at least half an hour to spinning every day, say they have no time, when I know for a fact that they waste two or more hours every day in idle talk or worse. How I wish they could be persuaded to take a leaf from my book."

I too wish that the millions of our common folk could be persuaded to copy this humble man's example.

The other letter is of a different type. The writer is from Bangalore. He does not know English. He reads *Harijansevak*. He writes:

"I was addicted to intoxicating drugs like *bhang*, *ganja*, *charas*. I could not do without them for a single day. I knew that the thing was bad, I often disliked it myself, as indeed the members of my family did dislike me. But a bad habit is not easy to give up. I often made an attempt, but work became difficult without a puff at my *chilam*. *Harijansevak* opened my eyes. Often enough there would be something in the articles which would make me ashamed of myself and say: 'You must leave this hateful habit.' Once as I was reading your article I resolved to give up *bhang*, *ganja*, *charas*, and as an earnest of my determination I decided to inform you of

my decision and send you Rs. 1-4-0. Well, I have kept the resolve. You have raised me from the state of a brute to man's estate, and I cannot adequately thank you. I made the resolve four years ago, and thanks to your grace I have never broken the resolve. But I should have written to you when I made the resolve and sent Rs. 1-4-0. I am sending you Rs. 5 now, as a penalty for my failure to do so for four years."

This is a very plain letter from an ordinary man, but it teaches every one of us that ordinary men can take extraordinary decisions and keep them. I do hope the writer has given up tobacco also along with the other drugs, for tobacco is as deadly in its effect as the rest. Tolstoy has said that smoking is worse in its criminal effects than drink, and now America's famous heavy-weight boxing champion—Gene Tunney—has written a vivid article to prove that nicotine knocks the bottom out of our physical, moral and spiritual strength. It is an article which, for want of space, I cannot reproduce. But some sentences in it deserve to be hung up as mottoes in every public place to warn smokers against what they are in for:

"With every puff heavy smokers shorten their own lives. . . . You do get a lift when you light a cigarette. But it is exactly like the lift you get from cocaine, heroin, marijuana. Under the nicotine whip the body burns up faster; heart-action, respiration and blood pressure are kept at a ding dong pitch. . . . Dr. Alexis Carrel states that even one puff from a cigarette contracts the tiniest capillaries in your legs and feet. . . . Too many people accept their craving for tobacco as a commonplace social habit. But I maintain that heavy smoking is a disease symptom. . . . While I was training for my second fight with Jack Dempsey, I was offered 15,000 dollars to endorse a certain brand of cigarettes. I didn't want to be rude, so in declining I merely said I didn't smoke. He came again with another offer—12,000 dollars if I would let my picture be used with the statement that 'stinkies must be good because all my friends smoke them'. That compelled me to say what I thought—that cigarettes were a foul pestilence, and that advertising which promoted their use was a national menace. . . . Ty Cobb, the famous Georgia Peach of baseball says: 'Cigarette smoking stupefies the brain, saps vitality, undermines health, and weakens moral fibre. No one who hopes to be successful in any line can afford to contract so detrimental a habit.' In face of such testimony I can only ask, with Tolstoy, 'Why do men stupefy themselves with tobacco?'"

The only thing is to realise that the smoking habit is a devastating scourge, and our friend whose letter I have cited above shows that even common folk can easily get rid of it.

Sevagram, 3-5-42

M. D.

The Indian States' Problem

By Gandhiji

687 Pages, Price Rs. 4. Postage 10 As. extra.

Status of Indian Princes

By Pyarelal

Price 4 As. Postage As. 1½ extra.

HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Harijan Sevak Sangh met in Wardha on 28th and 29th April. Seth G. D. Birla was considerate and took very little of my time. I have developed a dislike for making speeches, but I consented to answer some of the questions the members had brought with them to Sevagram on the 29th morning. The answers to these will be of use to all Harijan workers. Most were in Hindustani, some in English, and one in Gujarati. I suggested that in future all questions should be in Hindustani. Those who do not know either Hindi or Urdu should make it a point to learn the national language, and until such time as they are unable to write in Hindustani themselves, they must get someone to do so for them.

Q. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is looked upon as a part of the Congress. But very few Congressmen are Harijan workers. Why?

A. The Sangh is not a part of the Congress. It was the outcome of the fast I undertook in 1932 when I was in jail. The meeting of Hindus drawn from every class, which was held under the presidentship of Pandit Malaviyaji and which gave birth to the Sangh, deliberately decided to keep the organisation separate from the Congress and non-political. It was this quality of the Sangh that enabled Seth G. D. Birla to become its President and Shri Thakkar Bapa its Secretary. Nevertheless there are and ought to be many Congressmen in the Sangh, because practically all reformers are drawn into the Congress fold. But it is true that there are plenty of non-Congress persons in the Sangh. It is also true that those Congressmen who are only interested in politics do not come into it. It is, therefore, sometimes wrongly thought that Congressmen do not take an interest in the Sangh. It is the duty of every Congressman to remove untouchability, root and branch, from his life.

Q. Harijan service has really developed into mere Harijan uplift. Practically no work is done among Caste Hindus for the removal of untouchability. What is the remedy for this?

A. Experience shows that propaganda among Caste Hindus can only be successfully carried out by influential persons whose word carries weight with the general public. Such persons are hard to find. But it is within the capacity of every Harijan worker to carry on mute propaganda. Our Caste Hindu workers are often satisfied with mere uplift work among the Harijans, which is not sufficient. Many workers, while they do not observe untouchability themselves, are unable even to convert their own families. How then can they influence the outside world? Moreover it is my confirmed opinion that every Harijan worker has to make it a point to beg for even one pice for Harijans from those Caste Hindus with whom he comes in contact. If all devoted themselves, heart and soul, to this task, very good results would ensue.

Q. Should not the Sangh take upon itself the service of those Harijans who have been converted to Christianity or Islam and are yet treated as

untouchables? Are we not out to remove untouchability root and branch and therefore help all who come under its sway?

A. This question has already been answered in the columns of *Harijan* but must bear repetition so long as it is raised. The moment untouchability is utterly banished from Hindu society it will, *ipso facto*, disappear from elsewhere too. Whatever the merits or demerits of the case, it is clear that our interference with converts will be the cause of strife with Muslims and Christians. Such converts have either broken off all contacts with, or they have been in their turn boycotted by, Hindus. They have thrown in their lot with other sects whose leaders will not allow them to maintain their old contacts. Hence the H. S. S. quite rightly decided from its inception to confine its area of work to Harijans who had not left the Hindu fold. A convert, having left his original fold, is no longer guided or controlled by it.

Q. What should be the attitude of the Sangh, if Harijan boys wish to enlist in the army?

A. They should be allowed to do so. They may not be controlled by the Congress policy or ahimsa. They must be given absolute freedom of choice.

Q. Harijans are of opinion that Caste Hindus who are sympathetic to their cause should not use those temples where they are not allowed entry.

A. They are right. It is the bounden duty of Harijan workers not to go where Harijans are not allowed and likewise to dissuade Caste Hindus.

Q. Harijans are legally entitled to send their children to many educational institutions as also to draw water from public wells. But public sentiment still militates against this being put into practice. Should Harijans resort to the law courts for justice in these matters or wait patiently until the Caste Hindus are converted?

A. Where there is no danger of violence being done to them, the Harijans should exercise their legal right and where necessary resort to law courts. Harijan workers must continue agitation among Caste Hindus and not rest content with mere legal rights.

Q. Is it not essential to reform the insanitary methods employed by sweepers for cleaning latrines and scavenging?

A. It is most necessary. What is more, until this is done the condition of sweepers will remain pitiable. To this end it is the duty of Harijan workers and Caste Hindus to do sweepers' work themselves. No Caste Hindu will employ the methods used by sweepers. He will do the work scientifically. For example, he will never remove excreta in a basket or carry it on his head; he will cover excreta with dry earth and remove it in a metal vessel. He will avoid touching dirt with his hands as far as possible; he will clean the vessels with water and a rod; he will bathe immediately after doing the work; he will wear special clothes when scavenging. These reforms do not cost much. They require intelligence, hard work, and love of an ideal. We may not relegate sweepers' work to one particular class. Therefore all should learn it in the

same way as cooking. Each person should be his own sweeper. If this ideal were to be put into practice in society, the miserable condition of sweepers would at once be rectified.

Sevagram, 3-5-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Barren Cows

Q. Why may not work such as ploughing or grinding corn be taken from barren cows? Would that not be one way of preventing their going to the slaughter house?

A. This question used to be much discussed at one time owing to the enthusiasm of a Punjabi who used to advocate the use even of milch cows for draft purposes. He used to claim that they would yield more and richer milk for the exercise given to them. Anyway my devotion to the cow does not preclude me from taking such labour as she can perform without the slightest detriment to her body. The fact is that our treatment of draft animals leaves much to be desired. I would welcome the use of barren cows for gentle labour, if only it would make people more considerate than they are towards the other animals.

From the Frying Pan?

Q. You advise evacuation of cities likely to be bombed and migration into the villages. Do you imagine the villages to be safe? As a matter of fact the villagers are more panic-stricken than the city-dwellers. There is inadequate police protection, and villagers live in hourly terror of dacoits and robbers. Is it not a matter of jumping from the frying pan into the fire?

A. I have not suggested migration to the villages for the soft life they will provide. Fright was no ingredient of my plan. It was and still is good even from a military point of view as has now been made abundantly clear. All the danger you present is undoubtedly bound up with the migration to the villages. But that to my mind is an additional reason for it. Who will put heart into the villagers and dispel panic, if it is not the right type of experienced city people? They will cover not only the aged and the infirm who may migrate to the villages, but they will also help and serve the villagers in the many ways I have pointed out in these columns. Courage is indispensable in these times for every true act.

Rotatory Government

Q. In order to solve the communal tangle, why not divide India into two sections as far as population goes, e. g. Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis in one, and Hindus, Sikhs and Depressed Classes in the other. Let the first section rule for a period of five years by means of elected representatives and the second section come in similarly later. Would this not allay the present mistrust? As for Princes' India, could a Committee of elected Princes be entrusted with the work of governing all the States?

A. Your question reads well on paper; but your suggestion, if acted upon, must break down in practice. The act of government is not the simple thing you seem to imagine. What you suggest may work as a toy when the strings are pulled by armed authority. It won't be our Government. The puller of the strings will govern. That is the old way. I have presented the better way—the non-violent method. In either case the first condition is that every trace of foreign authority should be removed from the land. Then and then only shall we know our real selves—our strength as well as our weaknesses. When we are untrammelled by foreign or other authority and free, we shall know how to deal with the day-to-day problems. We won't then be governed in the neat way mentioned by you. The arbiter then will be either the sword or reason. Sevagram, 4-5-42

Deceitful Nomenclature

Morley has somewhere protested against the misuse of words, as being one of the causes of loose thinking. The phrase 'National Government' is an illustration of loose thinking. Admittedly none of the political parties—including the Congress—expects that any 'National Government' that may be formed at present will have the right to put an end to the war irrespective of the wishes of Great Britain. It can only be the Indian branch of the British Government. It is self-deception to call such office-taking 'National Government'. The name has already entrapped some of our legislators, and many more of them are yet willing to be entrapped. If we think closely instead of loosely, we will find that we cannot form a 'National Government' in the existing state of things.

Sevagram, 3-5-42

K. G. M.

A Correction

In *Harijan*, p. 124, col. 2, line 23, line 26, line 32, for 'mother-tongue', read 'script of the mother-tongue'.

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Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad

Subscription Rates—INLAND: One year, Rs. 5, six months, Rs. 3, FOREIGN: One year, Rs. 7 or 12 sh. or \$, 8